



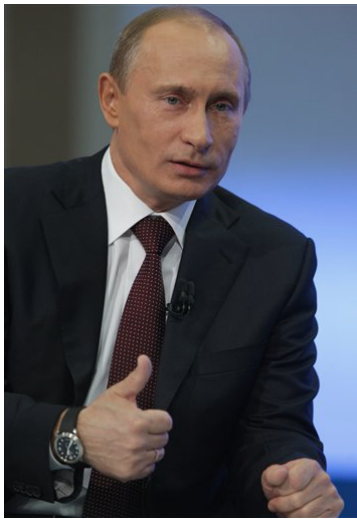
Price of a barrel
of petroleum

US\$ 76.46

0.14 ↑

INSIDE TODAY WORLD NEWS

NO DIS-PUTIN



Russian President Vladimir Putin speaks during a question-and-answer session broadcast live by Russia's state television in Moscow, Thursday, Dec. 3, 2009. The show sent another strong signal that Putin remains the dominant force in Russian politics, overshadowing his designated successor, President Dmitry Medvedev.

Read more on Page B8

SPORTS NEWS

NETS ZERO



An unidentified New Jersey Nets fan holds up a sign during the fourth quarter of an NBA basketball game against the Dallas Mavericks, Wednesday, Dec. 2, 2009, in East Rutherford, N.J. The Nets are 0-18 as the Mavericks won 117-101.

Read more on Page B11

Aruba Marriott Announces New Vice President and General Manager

PALM – Kevin Schwab has been named Vice President and General Manager of the Aruba Marriott Resort and Stellaris Casino as well as Marriott's Aruba Ocean Club and Marriott's Aruba Surf Club, both Marriott Vacation Club properties. Boasting decades in the hospitality industry, Schwab brings immeasurable luxury experience, deep familiarization with Marriott and new energy to the properties.

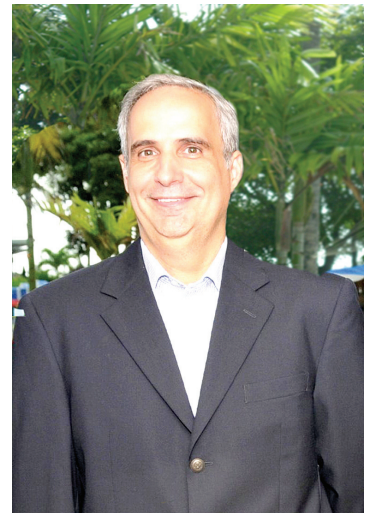
As VP and General Manager of the Aruba Marriott, Schwab will oversee the financial and physical operations of all three properties, as well

as develop and implement service-training programs. Fully dedicated to maintaining the resort's reputation for high service standards, he will draw upon his success and experience in luxury property management to take the resort to a new level in high-end hospitality excellence.

"I'm ready and eager to enter this new chapter of my career," said Schwab. "Aruba Marriott is a highly respected and outstanding Caribbean resort. I'm honored to fill this position and fully dedicated to ensuring the best vacation experiences possible for our guests."

Schwab's luxury-focused background will help ensure the property reaches its full potential following the recent \$50 million renovation that transformed the Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino. His experience and expertise working with high-end, service-oriented properties make him the perfect complement to the team at the Aruba Marriott.

Most recently spending time as Vice President and Managing Director in Asia during pre-construction on the Ritz-Carlton and Marriott project in Macao, Schwab has been



Vice President and General Manager of the Aruba Marriott Resort and Stellaris Casino as well as Marriott's Aruba Ocean Club and Marriott's Aruba Surf Club Kevin Schwab is pictured in the La Vista Restaurant of the resort.

~ Photo by Julia Renfro ~

making his mark with Marriott for more than 25 years. His experience includes ten years as a General Manager at luxury properties that include the Ritz Carlton, San Juan and JW Marriott Hotel Mexico City. He has been honored with prestigious awards such as 'Executive Chef of the Year' and 'Manager of the Year' and has contributed to several hotel openings and takeovers including Marriott resorts in Argentina, Venezuela, Peru and Puerto Rico.

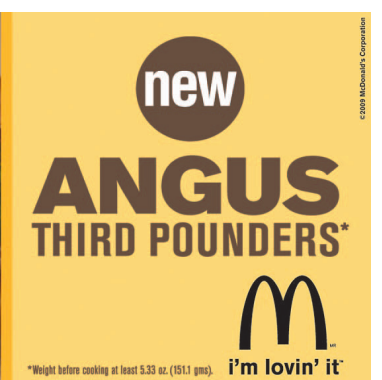
Also a steward and valuable asset to his community, Schwab and his wife Nadine enjoy doing volunteer work for Habitat for Humanity and giving back to the community around them. □

Visser Institute Foundation announces a Healthy Food Labeling System pilot project on Aruba

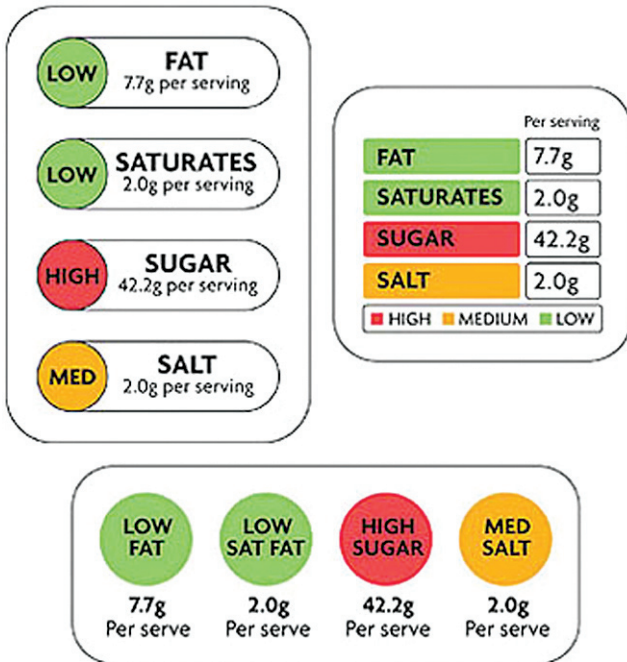


Dr. Hirasing, Dr. Visser, Dr. Blok and stakeholders

ORANJESTAD -- On Monday, November 30, Aruba's Minister of Public Health and Sports, Dr. Richard Visser, announced the launching of a the Healthy Food Labeling System, FOL, a privately funded project of his Richard Visser Institute, a non-profit foundation dedicated to public awareness, education and the promotion of healthy living. The FOL project, which is similar to the "Stoplight" program in England, and has also been initiated in Holland, has been an initiative of the Visser Institute since 2007, but now as Minister of Public Health, Dr. Visser has the opportunity to see it realized. *See Next Page*



Visser Institute Foundation announces a Healthy Food Labeling System pilot project on Aruba



Continued from Front Page

Collaborating on the project is Professor Dr. Remy Hirasing, and Dr. Derekian Blok, both specialists in youth wellness, along with Lucas Schwiebbe of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. Minister Visser advocates the use of colored sailboats, which provides continuity to his overall healthy living programs and logos, to advise consumers easily about making healthy choices in their comestibles.



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Doctors and health services have been warning the public about the growing problem of obesity and its consequences, particularly in youth.

The burden this will place on individuals, families and the community in health costs and loss of productivity is already alarming, and expected to increase as fast food franchises and diets heavily weighted with fats and sugars takes it toll. Dr. Blok mentioned that statistics indicate Aruba is among the top ten nations in the world to have a serious obesity problem in ratio to its population.

Many are aware of the need to shop and eat less fats and sugars, but also wish to enjoy the occasional treat, or sometimes don't even realize how much they dominate what some would consider healthy alternatives. Marketing often misrepresents health content by the use of catch words that have little

nutritional meaning but sound healthy.

The labeling system will differentiate between not only the products that are obviously part of a healthier diet (whole grain pasta, rice or bread, raw vegetables and low-sugar snacks) but will also help shoppers recognize the content of favorite snack foods, and how one may be less detrimental to health than another.

The English stoplight system uses the familiar red, amber and green to indicate products high in fats and sugars, those middle-range, and those that should make up the major part of a healthy diet. By balancing the FOL intelligently, one can indulge in the occasional treat, but still maintain a balanced diet.

The FOL is part of Minister Visser's National Health Plan, which he feels, with government cooperation, can be fully realized by 2018. □

FAVI FUNDACION CU VISION

Aruba TODAY

Don't drink & DRIVE

A rapt audience hears about health facts, diets and the functioning of the body

Lecture by Anton Isaak at De Suikertuin



ORANJESTAD - "If you want to have a healthy life style and lose weight, there are just three things you need to do," said Anton Isaak during the third monthly 'discussion evening' at De Suikertuin restaurant in the Wilhelminastraat. "Eat what you don't like, drink what's not very nice and do what you don't want to do. That translates into: eat vegetables, drink water and exercise. It's as simple as that."

Isaak, a well-known osteopath on the island, touched during his lecture upon a wide array of subjects, all related to eating and the functioning of the body. He explained

clearly why diets do not work, none of them, and how we are manipulated every minute of the day by advertising. "Especially the power of the pharmaceutical multinationals is astounding," he said. One of the examples during the evening was that you only see happy, healthy families in fast food ads on television. The people working behind the counter are invariably young, good-looking and happy. "Have you ever seen anyone like that working at a MacDonalds? No, because the company probably only hires employees who look exactly like their customers."



How food is processed by your body and why it is so important to chew your food instead of stuffing it into your mouth, to eat in a relaxed atmosphere and to enjoy what you eat, were explained succinctly and illustrated with funny anecdotes during the 2-hour long lecture. The difference in behavior between men and women formed a hilarious finale.

About 25 guests, most of them female, enjoyed a most entertaining evening at De Suikertuin. □



Special Month of December!

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Entrée	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh Catch of the Day prepared by our local chef just the way you like it. • Jumbo Shrimp from our local waters, breaded served with potato or rice or with garlic tossed over linguine. • Filet Mignon 8 oz. US Tenderloin • Grilled Boneless Chicken Breast
Dessert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chocolate or Banana Cake • Ice Cream • Coffee / Tea

* This special cannot be used with any other promotions, vouchers or certificates.

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*Kids Eat Free *Kids under age 12, one per paying adult

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Tuesday Bravo Italiano

Wednesday An island favorite - BBQ night

Thursday Chateaubriand, Oo-la-la

Friday International Seafood Festival

Saturday Simply Perfect - Prime Rib

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The statue of a forgotten icon unveiled yesterday

~ James Henry Lynch immortalised ~

PHILIPSBURG--Not many people may remember that after Hurricane Donna of 1960, one man led one small team to repair and rebuild every home in St. Maarten that had suffered damage. The public of St. Maarten will receive a history lesson today when the statue of James Henry Lynch at the roundabout in Belvedere is unveiled, revealing the St. Maarten icon who led the three-year rebuilding effort. Father of former Commissioner Edgar Lynch and union leader Julian Lynch, James Henry Lynch was just one of many

people who sacrificed to build St. Maarten in its early developing days and who disappeared from memory over the years, save his immediate family. He was immortalised in bronze yesterday and his eldest living son Julian used the opportunity to tell his father's story.

Born in Montserrat, James Henry Lynch eventually moved to Aruba where he started his family and obtained his Dutch nationality. He made his home in St. Maarten from 1957, only to see it literally destroyed by Hurricane Donna in 1960. By

some strange coincidence, the location of the roundabout is the same area where the roof of his house landed when it was blown off by hurricane winds.

Despite the damage sustained to his own home, Lynch, who was contracted by government, worked 24 hours a day with his team to rebuild and repair homes around St. Maarten. In the days of no power tools or heavy equipment, most of the work had to be done by hand. Assisting in this effort were other iconic figures of St. Maarten including John Larmonie, Jim Richardson, Jocelyn Arindell and Alexis "Lexi" Arnell. Julian Lynch not only helped his father by maintaining the paperwork, but also chipped in from an early age with construction.

He said at times he misunderstood his father, a strict disciplinarian, who was known for dishing out tough love. He reminisced on the time he was holding down some wood while his father was using a hand-saw to cut through it. His father accidentally sliced his hand but never stopped working. It was left to the workmen on site to take him to the hospital for treatment.

In the meantime, his father just kept working. On his return to the worksite, his father, in his typical straightforward style, told him "I think I will have to stop spending money on your schooling." Totally confused, Julian thought his father was

non-caring. Then the tough love came through when his father added, "you see the saw coming, you should have moved your hand."

Edgar Lynch said his father was also one of the first local entrepreneurs on the Dutch side when he started his own cement block company. At that time, the only other cement company on the island belonged to Jean "Tata" Brooks – the same Tata who was recently immortalised when his statue was unveiled a few yards away at the Bishop Hill roundabout. The two worked together then and, coincidentally, now stand with each other again.

"They did a lot of work together building many homes, sometimes on credit for blocks. He was also a sub-contractor at Princess Juliana Airport, he was President of the Men's Fellowship of the Methodist Church and he was very keen on education. He would spank anyone who was out of school during school hours, Edgar Lynch said.

For the Lynch family, honouring its late patriarch at Belvedere seems only fitting, as Dutch Quarter and Belvedere are known as "Lynch country." The family has worked the pastures in Belvedere with livestock since the 50s. James Lynch has worked with the Plantz and other families in the area and "we are thankful that we are able to witness the change in Belvedere today," Edgar

Lynch said.

He added that his parents had instilled a strong sense of family in their children, and as such was very proud of the fact that the Lynch family had established a family foundation to keep the family and its heritage connected.

"This is a credit to my father," he said. "I have always said there are three kinds of St. Maarteners: those who were born here, persons who have made here their home and persons who are St. Maarteners because of ancestral rights. My father made St. Maarten his home and made his contributions to this island. People still thank me today for the work my father did," he said.

He went on to thank the government and people of St. Maarten for honouring his father, sculptor Michael Maghiro of Ikemba Gallery for being the "ultimate professional" and keeping the family informed and involved in the design process, and Romeo Pantophlet who had suggested the location of the roundabout.

During the ceremony, which took place in Belvedere, Julian Lynch, now the patriarch of the family after the sudden, recent passing of his elder brother, will outline the family lineage that dates back to the days of slavery, including slave names of his mother's ancestry.

James Henry Lynch passed away in 1971 at the age of 70. □



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LOUIS VUITTON

FIESSO D'ARTICO A WORKSHOP IN THE HOME OF SHOES



When, with the emergence of shoes as a dynamic part of its fashion business, Louis Vuitton decided to establish a dedicated workshop, it naturally turned to the Veneto region of Northern Italy. Here, in the fertile plains around Venice, shoemaking is a family tradition, a highly specialized craft passed on from one generation to the next. In 2000, Louis Vuitton opened its workshop at Fiesso d'Artico, a small town that proclaims itself the home of shoes – not without justification for, concentrated within a radius of just two or three miles, is all the know-how on which the region's reputation for crafting the world's finest elegant women's footwear is founded.

A UNIQUE TRADITION OF CRAFTSMANSHIP

The Fiesso workshop has recently been fully renovated, and was re-inaugurated in April 2006. It now houses, in addition to the manufacture, the key design, planning and industrial departments, integrating the entire creative process within its light, airy spaces with polished wood floors. Louis Vuitton currently employs 140 people in Fiesso, drawing for the most part on the skills of the local population, so that it is not unusual for a father and son, or husband and wife, to work virtually side by side. In an era of delocalization, Louis Vuitton is thus helping to perpetuate a unique tradition of craftsmanship which, if lost, would be lost forever. Shoemaking is indeed a highly specialized craft involving a vast diversity of skills, from last-making and pattern-cutting to stitching uppers and assembling soles. The Veneto region is home to a host of tiny workshops, some employing no more than a handful of people, with

established expertise in individual components, be they lasts, heels, soles or insoles. Over the past few years, Louis Vuitton has invested heavily in these essential partners to ensure quality and consistency of supply.

A PAINSTAKING PROCESS

Before the skills of the craftsmen are called on, however, a complex creative process has already taken place. On the basis of a sketch by the design team, who work between Fiesso and Paris in close association with Marc Jacobs, the planning department cuts a pattern and fits it onto a last made of hornbeam, a variety of birch. At Louis Vuitton, a separate pair of lasts is made for each design, each half-size and each foot, adding up to hundreds of lasts every season, which are archived, but not used again. Once the designers have made adjustments – sometimes sketching on the last to specify, for example, the exact positioning of a strap – the planning department produces a prototype and then a sample, which must be tested by the industrial department to validate its feasibility for manufacture and by the laboratories to verify the resistance of key components such as the leather and the heel. Only then can the manufacturing process be set in motion. First, a so-called industrial pair is developed – always, in the case of women's shoes, in size 37, which represents the middle of the size range – to give an idea of the overall volume and visual impact of the shoe. After adjustments, a conformity pair, again in size 37, is made, which will be quality-tested before the order to produce is given. Then, for the first time, a single pair of shoes will be crafted in every size. These will be painstakingly validated once again to ensure that, despite the

differences in proportion, each size replicates to perfection the characteristics of the 37.

MINUTE ATTENTION TO DETAIL

Every Louis Vuitton shoe is the result of at least 150 separate operations, from the stitching of the upper, through the assembly of the shoe on the last, starting with the all-important insole, which must bear the full weight of the body yet still be supple enough for comfort, to the

positioning of the heel and the gluing of the sock, the decorative lining on which the foot rests. Many of these operations are performed by hand, and depend exclusively on the dexterity of the trained craftsman, who works methodically pair by pair, appraising each with an expert eye and making minute adjustments to ensure perfect symmetry. The craft of shoemaking is so specialized that it is rare for any one artisan to master a whole series of different skills. Those who do are known in Italian as gioielli – literally jewels – so precious is their know-how.

True to Louis Vuitton's tradition of flawless craftsmanship, as much attention is paid to the inside of a shoe as to the outside. Often, it will be lined in a contrasting colour or a particularly luxurious material – a special grade of satin woven

with the Monogram Multicolore pattern, for example. Sometimes, linings will feature elaborate cut-outs, executed with infinite skill and patience, while the signature brown and beige label is often secured with two hand-stitches, recalling the saddle-stitching on the leather goods. Every pair of shoes is meticulously checked before being packed in its box for shipment to the 240 of the more than 350 Louis Vuitton stores worldwide that present the shoe collection. Already, despite this limited distribution, Louis Vuitton is one of the world's five leading luxury shoe manufacturers, with a reputation for quality that is second to none. Inspired by the example of its historic workshop in Asnières, Louis Vuitton aims further to enhance the expertise of Fiesso d'Artico in all aspects of shoemaking and, ultimately, to create shoes to special order. □



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or
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or
Chicken Breast Picatta
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- Dessert -

Carrot Cake with Carrot Jelly
& Raspberry Sauce
or
Traditional Crème Brulée

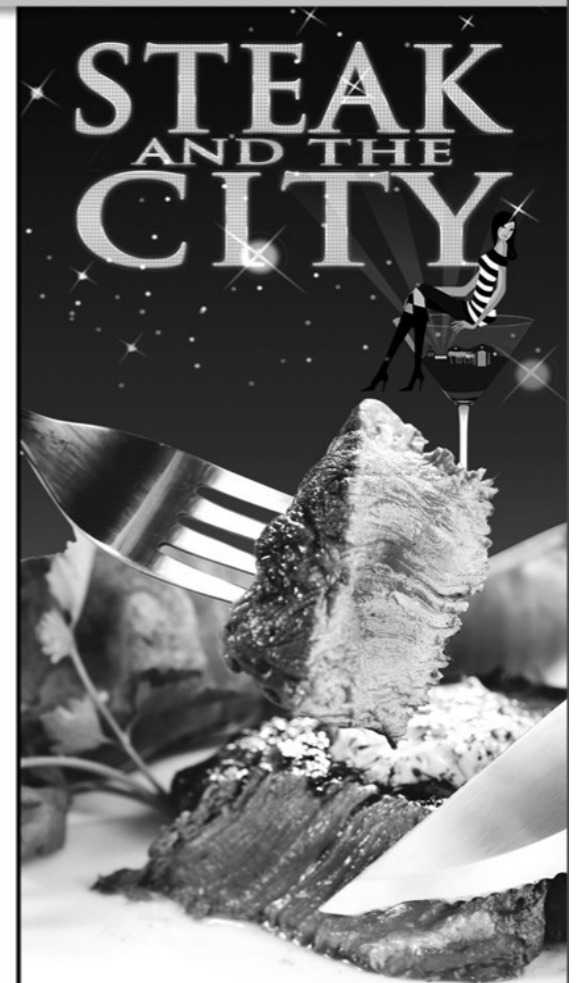
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Caribbean: Get a lowdown on the locals



Sara Macefield

Clients that don't stray from the beach can miss out on the Caribbean's diverse cultures. Sara Macefield suggests ways for them to get out and meet the people

Scratch beneath the surface of the Caribbean's tropical charms and you'll discover

what many regard as the islands' greatest selling point – its people. Getting to know the locals, sharing experiences, swapping jokes and comparing notes on the Windies latest performance on the cricket pitch can prove to be a highlight of any holiday here.

Voluntourism is another way for visitors to meet islanders, as more sustainable tourism projects are encouraging visitors to get involved. "These projects are a great way for tourists to meet and support local people and help them make a living from tourism," Travel Foundation chief executive

Sue Hurdle said.

Some islands realise that their people are their best ambassadors and have developed specific programmes to bring them into closer contact with visitors, while others rely on local events and parties to bring tourists and locals together. Here's a rough guide to "meeting and greeting", Caribbean style.

Meeting the locals

This is probably the most formal style of programme, offered in Jamaica and the Bahamas.

Jamaica's Meet the People initiative is run by the tourist board, which puts like-minded locals and holidaymakers in touch with one another for outings, church visits or meals in their homes.

Similarly, the Bahamas' People to People programme, run by the tourism ministry, allows visitors to meet Bahamians for a taste of local life. Bahamians are matched with visitors of a similar age with compatible interests and professions. One of the programme's main organised events is a monthly tea party at

Government House in Nassau and similar events on Exuma, Abaco and Grand Bahama.

Ministry of Tourism director-general Vernice Walkine said visitors had rated the programme positively, describing it as the best part of their holiday. As a result, the ministry plans to relaunch an expanded version of the scheme next year. This will enable visitors to meet their host online and start communicating via Facebook or other online forums before they arrive in the islands.

Walkine said a new group of young people had been invited to sign up as host volunteers: "Quite a few volunteers have been doing it for a long time, but a whole new generation of young professionals want to be a part of the programme."

On Dominica, home to the Caribbean's only indigenous population of Carib Indians, known as Kalinago, tourists can experience their way of life with guide and former Carib chief Irvine Auguste, on the Touna Village Tour.

Continued on Page B13



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Live Flamenco Show & Paella Party tonight at Casa Tua Barcelona



ORANJESTAD - Tonight is going to be a great, great night at Casa Tua Barcelona. Don't miss a must see Live Flamenco Show with songbird Angela Croes who will fill the restaurant with flamenco songs and rumba gitana music. Angela is much more than music, she performs authentic Spanish dancing. The show will start around 8:30 pm and be complemented with Casa Tua's famous Paella and some new dishes like baby octopus a la planca and mussels.

You don't have to wait for the show as the highlight at Casa Tua Barcelona are new lunch specials every weekday from Monday till Friday! A \$9.95 lunch special; Beef tenderloin with a red wine sauce or choose the Grouper Fillet for \$11.95. Both dishes include a soft drink. Fresh Fish lovers can treat the palate to the Whole Red Snapper, served with Rice and a salad for \$19.95.

All days of the week we serve Cold and Hot tapas as appetizers or the delicious Iberian Ham Pata Negra which we import directly from Andalucía. As your main course you could choose our Paella, traditionally prepared on the spot by our chef! Combine this Spanish dish with our home-made sangria to complete your dinner.

Of course we saved the best for last as no one does an ending better than Casa Tua with their dreamy Tiramisu. If you're into something different we suggest tasting the Espresso Martini Cocktail as dessert, you won't be disappointed.

The best part about such a good ending is that it guarantees you'll be back for more...



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People from all over the world get together at Bugaloe: they have a few drinks, a bite to eat, they dance and sway and make new friends. If you have gotten curious here and now, check out the website www.bugaloe.com and you will see at one place what we are talking about. No words will be needed anymore. Surf to the website for the Bugaloe Event Calendar or leave a note in the Guestbook.



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Bugaloe's daily Happy Hours are considered the starting signal for an evening of **partying** on the island. Locals mingle with visitors and raise their glasses. When you get hungry, order a scrumptious burger, a gourmet pizza, tasty wings or a salad and party on.

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Wednesday 7-11pm: PM Band

Friday 6-10pm: PM Band

Sunday 6-10pm: Tsunami, Robert Jeand'or, Abstract Dawn or Marisela & Aquarius

J. E. Irausquin Blvd 79 at De Palm Pier • Tel: (297) 5862233 • Website: www.bugaloe.com • Email: info@bugaloe.com



PALM BEACH — Romance Night on Wednesday at Mr Jazz was enchanting with the charismatic Sharon Rose on stage for her second scheduled performance. Her last concert will be next Wednesday, December 9th, and fans are

Romance Night at Mr Jazz is Enchanting



urged to make reservations for that popular night ahead of time. Famous Aruban singer Sharon Rose, in possession of a warm and seductive voice delivered a fantastic program. Diners, among them Padu del Caribe, the father of Aruba's culture, and his daughter Vivian Lampe, enjoyed the club's delightful Cuban-Aruban cuisine, from 6:30 to 11 p.m., while watching Rose entertain. Her three-set show, from 8 to 11 p.m. included many local favorites and Mr Jazz combined the music with

a complimentary champagne toast for couples and a beautiful rose, for the ladies. Wednesdays at Mr Jazz present a great opportunity to celebrate anniversaries, honeymoons or simply love. Also enjoying the food, music and ambiance a group of 27 Colegio Arubano students with their mentor Ms Hernandez, booked for an early Christmas dinner; second time visitors Byron Dee and Carey, staying at Divi Resorts from North Carolina, and the Fazio, Lena,



Tripaldi and Kaether families, staying at Marriot Ocean Club, coming to Aruba each year for the past nine, loving every moment, including each other's company! □



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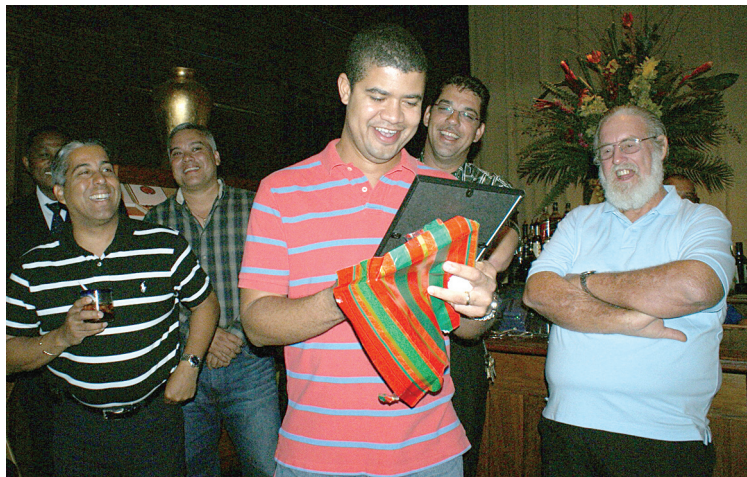
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Jorge gets a warm send off to Curacao



PALM BEACH -- The island's food & beverage professionals to come say ATC, invited many of the farewell to Jorge Curiel,



the company's Sales & Marketing Manager for Wines, Beer & Mineral Water, for the past five year. Jorge just recently received an attractive offer on the island of Curacao and decided to further develop his career on that neighboring island.

At his farewell gathering at Amazonia Churrascaria over a delicious toast of Opus One, the famed Bordeaux-style blend, ATC's Managing Director Gilberto Junior Croes credited Jorge for growing the company's business as the island's largest wine purveyor and for building and maintaining so many friendships within the hospitality industry.

Jorge, an avid deep sea fisherman received a few super-size hooks for the big ones he is about to catch in Curacao, as well as a state of the art fishing rod, with the hope he will have time to devote to his hobby, in the future.

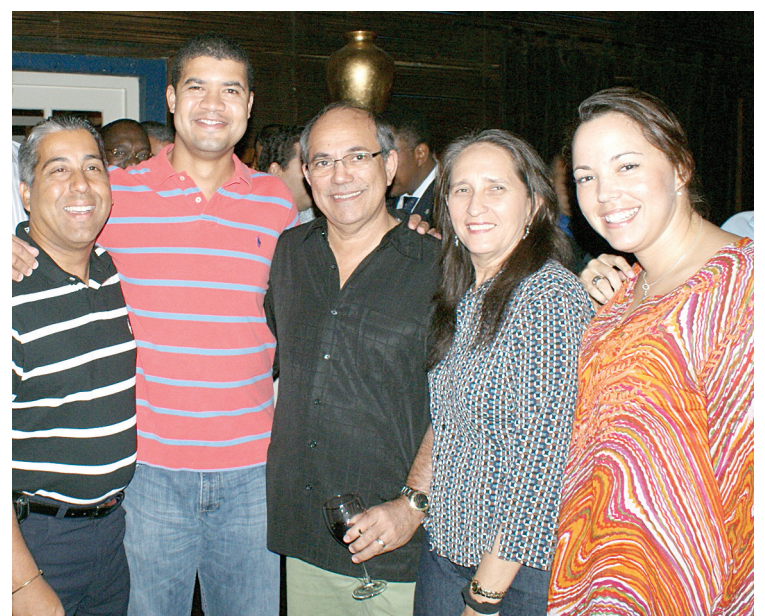
"The past 5 years at Aruba Trading Company have been some of the best of my life and part of this is thanks to you," Jorge said at the gathering, "I am very grateful and honored



to have met and worked with all of you. Thank you for the support, guidance, and encouragement you have provided me during my time at Aruba Trading Company."

The extensive wine portfolio of the ATC will now be entrusted to Monrich, Jorge's very knowledgeable,

up and coming successor. Pictured here, host Hubert Solagnier, restaurant manager Amazonia Churrascaria and his staff, catering a most congenial and fun cocktail party in honor of Jorge Curiel. The party was also attended by the Minister of Justice Arthur Dowers. □



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Plane flown by Solihull hero pilot Robert Mansell is found

by Sophie Cross,
Birmingham Mail

THE wreckage of the doomed plane flown by hero Midland pilot Robert Mansell has been located in the Caribbean after a five week search, it was revealed today.

Mr Mansell sacrificed himself to save the lives of his passengers when the plane crashed into the sea close to the island of Bonaire.

The impact knocked him unconscious, but his piloting skills saved the lives of the nine passengers on board. However, they were unable to unfasten Mr Mansell's seat belt before the nine-seater Britten-Norman Islander plane sank on October 21.

His body has not been recovered.

An American search vessel has now located the wreckage and salvage teams will tomorrow

try to raise it from the sea bed and hopefully recover his body.

News of the discovery will come as a relief to the family of Mr Mansell, aged 32, from Knowle.

His sister, Claire had said the waiting had been "tearing them apart". "Words cannot express the utter devastation and loss we all feel," she said. "My brother is a hero, the surviving passengers and their families are overjoyed with his heroic actions. A hero needs a hero's welcome home to the UK."

"Salvage and repatriation is all that matters to us. We just want him back, to bring him home and do what's best for him so we can begin grieving."

However, they are understood to have been angered after being contacted by a television company wishing to film



the salvage for a National Geographic programme.

A family friend said she was "shaken to the core" by the

idea. The tragedy happened as Mr Mansell, who worked for Divi Divi Air, was piloting an island hop flight from Curacao to Bonaire.

The company operates up to nine flights a day between Caribbean islands but the doomed flight Divi A14

developed an engine problem just three miles from its destination.

It ditched into Dutch territorial waters and since then his family has been working closely with the Dutch authorities to arrange repatriation of his body. □

Marlin wants new approach to Brooks Tower applicants

PHILIPSBURG--Commissioner William Marlin has condemned requirements for Brooks Tower Accord (BTA) applicants in St. Maarten as too strict, calling for a "different approach" to processing undocumented residents who want to legalise their status.

Citing a woman's attempts to apply for the one-year BTA permit, Marlin criticised the procedures that required non-nationals to prove with multiple copies of documents the length of time they have lived here. The woman, whom Marlin didn't name, had to present several papers for each of the 15 years she has lived here while, according to him, her stamped passport and money-transfer receipts seemed enough proof.

"We think it is utter nonsense and ridiculous," Marlin said at Wednesday's Executive Council press briefing.

"In Curaçao, they have a totally different approach."

The commissioner said he had spoken with Antillean Justice Minister Magali Jacoba last week about loosening the restrictions that had undocumented residents who live here complaining that it was hard for them to become legal residents.

The Brooks Tower Accord, which went into effect one month ago today, grants temporary residence permits to undocumented persons living in the Netherlands Antilles for a certain minimum length of time.

"We have understood from persons who have been going there that there has been a change of heart," Marlin said, "But we need to follow up to ensure that it is done in the proper manner." Minister Jacoba could not be reached for comment Wednesday. □



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Carrington hopes for intensified St. Maarten-Caricom relations

PHILIPSBURG--A call by Caribbean Community Caricom Secretary-General Edwin Carrington for St. Maarten to embark on the process of fostering closer ties with its regional partners has been greeted with enthusiasm by Finance Commissioner Xavier Blackman and the business sector.

Carrington, who was in transit in St. Maarten en route to Antigua on Wednesday, met briefly with Blackman, Chamber of Commerce President Glen Carty and his Vice President Ludwig Ouenniche at Plantation Grill and Bar.

Carrington told The Daily Herald before boarding his flight that Caricom would welcome closer ties with the island territory, which is expected to attain its new constitutional status as country within the Dutch kingdom on

October 10, 2010.

He said he was cognisant of the island territory's push for a new status, adding, "We have been waiting to get some indication as to what the end product would be like and what sort of implications this will have for relations between St. Maarten and Caricom."

Efforts had been made in the past for the Netherlands Antilles to obtain some sort of status within Caricom. However, with St. Maarten pushing for more autonomy, Carrington said it should also seek to intensify its relations regionally.

"We would be happy for closer relations between St. Maarten and the countries of Caricom, whether it is associate relations or whether it's membership. It's their (St. Maarten's) choice, but the closeness we feel should be intensified, whether it be on

a social level, in tourism or in transport," he said. "We need to bring the Caribbean, all parts of it, closer and closer together. The rest of it I leave it for the government and the people."

Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, and Turks and Caicos Islands currently hold Associate Member status in Caricom.

"The thing about associate members is that as of today there is no coded or codified document which says that as an associate member you are entitled to this or that. This is currently being formalised, but associate members do enjoy most of the things enjoyed in the political spheres: they attend meetings and participate in different discussions, but they are not committed to the trade arrangement and they are not committed to what I would call the political decisions,"

said Carrington.

The technical work is currently being hammered out to specify the benefits of Associate Members, a process that Carrington hopes will be completed by the end of 2010.

Blackman agreed with Carrington, saying that forging ties was a step in the right direction. "There is a lot that we can do regionally and it's very logical for us to forge these relationships," Blackman said shortly after coming out of the meeting with Carrington. "We need to start forging relations and we need to let our Caribbean neighbours know that we are out there, what we are doing and what we want to do, and also find out what they are doing."

He said the process of regional integration was not new, as it had started at the Central Government level years ago,

but had never trickled down to the level of the individual island territories. "As St. Maarten, we have a unique opportunity before 10/10/10 to start exploring those relationships and to start laying the contacts."

Blackman said he would raise the issue at the Island Government level so that steps could be taken to determine the requirements for Country St. Maarten to become affiliated with Caricom.

Carty said the meeting with Carrington had been a "learning experience" and the chamber wanted to assist in the process that would be embarked upon for Country St. Maarten to gain status within Caricom. He said the Chamber already had started some groundwork pushing for preliminary talks. "We do not believe that we should wait until 10/10/10. These discussions should and can start right after the New Year so that we can have a good exchange of information," he said.

Ouenniche said he was happy with the willingness of parties to foster cooperation and looked forward to seeing this come to fruition. He said if St. Maarten did not act now it stood to lose resources it could tap.

Carrington also had high praises for the beauty of destination St. Maarten. He said, "I was shocked the first time I came here a few years ago, to know that there is such a beautiful island in the Caribbean and I hadn't seen it in all these years. Since then every time I have a chance to come here, I do so." □

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CUIDA BO OIDO

Caribbean: Get a lowdown on the locals



Continued from Page 6

He explains why his community opened up their homes and gardens to tourists, who can see how they live and try traditional crafts such as bamboo basket weaving and sugar cane juice squeezing. Visitors can also opt for a Community Garden and Creole Cooking tour, where they go to the house of locals Michael and Daria Eugene to prepare a traditional Creole meal.

Staying with the locals

Grenada's Homestay programme offers a fascinating insight into Grenadian lifestyle. This isn't like staying at a bed and breakfast; homestay guests are treated like members of the family and are involved in the day-to-day lives of their hosts and the local community. Visitors are matched up with local families by interests, hobbies and children. The homes, located across the island, range from simple wooden houses with basic amenities to comfortable residences. In some cases, visitors stay in a self-contained apartment within the family residence.

Tobago's Bed and Breakfast Association gives holidaymakers the chance to stay in guest-houses or self-catering apartments

owned and run by local families.

They are usually located in or near villages, giving visitors the chance to mingle with residents and enjoy the local culture.

Helping the locals

Guests at the Hyatt Regency Aruba hotel can take part in the island's eco-friendly voluntourism programme, which was launched earlier this year. They can sign up with the resort's concierge and join volunteer staff in a morning's clean-up. Jakes, Jamaica's chic boutique hotel near Negril, has unveiled a volunteer Goodwill Jamaica Package, which allows guests to take part in three days of guided visits and activities at nearby schools, farms, fishing communities and construction projects. Guests at Jamaica's luxury Half Moon resort near Montego Bay can take part in its Beyond the Beach programme, which aids local communities and was set up after guests asked to be involved in the resort's charitable work. They can participate in its ongoing programme or individual activities such as reading to youngsters at a children's home, bringing supplies for local schools or helping build a home in a children's village.

Honeymooners staying at the Westin St John hotel on St John in the US Virgin Islands can qualify for a \$100 resort credit and free transfers if they book the resort's honeymoon package and take part in the American Hiking Association's volunteer vacation programme. The AHA has linked up with the Friends of the Virgin Islands National Park to offer volunteer hiking trips, which include environmental initiatives. Saga operates a volunteer programme on St Lucia, where guests staying at their hotel on the island, the Bel Jou, for four weeks and help out at schools in the Castries area. As part of its Community Routes programme, every week Sandals Resorts takes guests to a local project such as a school where they may read to the children, or a working farm to see how it operates.

Cleaning up with the locals

Every July, Aruba runs the Reef Care Project— the island's largest volunteer environmental initiative, in which more than 800 locals and tourists help clean-up the island's marine environment. Bahamas Coastal Awareness month, which takes place every April, is aimed at locals, but holidaymakers can join in the beach clean-ups and other initiatives. The Dominica Sea Turtle Conservation Organisation offers another marine-related volunteering opportunity. Volunteers help to monitor nesting turtles and patrol the beaches to help protect endangered turtles.

Partying with the locals

As you would expect in the Caribbean, there are plenty

of chances to mingle with locals at regular events, plus the annual carnival celebrations that turn each island into one big party to which everyone is invited. Antigua's weekly sunset barbecue at Shirley Heights attracts islanders and tourists, as does Sunday School on Tobago, a weekly street party in the fishing village of Buccoo. On St Eustatius, visitors can meet the local Statians at the weekly happy hour at Smoke Alley Bar & Grill on Fridays, or at the Old Gin House on Wednesdays, where local music and cheap drinks attract all-comers.

There are plenty of chances to mingle with residents of the British Virgin Islands, who are known as Belongers. The monthly

full moon party at Bomba's Shack at Apple Bay, Tortola, sometimes attracts more than 1,000 people, while a more family-orientated full moon party is held at Trellis Bay on Beef Island, Tortola. Musician and songwriter Quito Rhymer owns Quito's Gazebo at Cane Garden Bay, Tortola, and plays there with his band, The Edge, every Friday night, attracting plenty of locals, and visitors are always welcome. On Barbados, the weekly fish fry evenings at Oistins add a local flavour, where islanders mingle for a fun and cheap evening out. Montserrat has two big annual events that offer a great opportunity to mix with the community: St Patrick's Week, in March, and the Montserrat Festival, in December. □



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Sales Team
Elly Erasmus
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Page Designer
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Advertising Coordinator
Sandra Loeffstop-Duarte
aviso@bondia.com
bondia.aruba@gmail.com

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The real jobs summit? At the Bernanke Fed.

By the Monitor's Editorial Board

The person best able to bring back jobs to unemployed Americans spent Thursday trying to keep his own job.

Ben Bernanke had to justify another four-year term for himself as chairman of the US central bank before a skeptical Senate Banking Committee. It now looks as if he'll get to keep his gainful employment, but the grilling of the Federal Reserve chief on Capitol Hill only shows why he – more so than the one-day "jobs summit" at the White House – is the government's best hope to spur private-sector hiring.

The Fed has already poured more than \$1 trillion of newly printed dollars into the economy since 2008, kept interest rates near zero, and saved many faltering but "too big to fail" financial institutions. Now it is using its immense powers as a regulatory agency to squeeze banks and others to start lending to small businesses – the nation's largest source of new jobs, especially during a recovery.

While Congress debates tax credits for employers or whether to spend more in another stimulus package, it is the Fed that will best drive the economy back to prosperity. That explains the political pressure on Mr. Bernanke to commit to a stronger-than-usual jobs-creation policy from members of Congress who face voters next year.

"Jobs are the issue right now," the Fed chief told the senators. Indeed, the worst unemployment rate is among young blacks – about 30 percent – while the jobless rate for people between 16 and 24 is a high 19 percent. More than 8 million private-sector jobs have been lost since the recession began in late 2007. With the rise in government red ink becoming a risk to the economy itself, all eyes turn to the Fed and its ability to regulate and raise money as the main way to stoke the job market.

Congress is so worried about fixing the economy quickly that some members want to put pressure on the Fed by reducing its independence. They want to make sure it puts job creation ahead of its other duty – preventing inflation and stabilizing prices by raising interest rates.

One idea that has passed a House committee is to set up an outside audit of the Fed by the Government Accountability Office (GAO). A Senate bill would strip the Fed of its regulatory responsibilities over large financial institutions.

Yet Fed independence is essential to the economy, as investors look to its professionals, more than politicians, to keep a steady hand on monetary policy and on banks. If anything, the threat that such bills pose will only add to the uncertainty among investors and hinder job growth. □



The MBA Oath: Toward a More Perfect World

By Humberto Moreira
and Whitney Petersmeyer

Last month we watched as news broke of one of the largest insider-trading scandals in history. While the urgency of the financial crisis may be dissipating, the need for a higher ethical standard in business is as relevant as ever.

The MBA Oath is a voluntary pledge to create value responsibly and ethically. With over 1,700 signers and growing, the Oath has helped MBAs from around the world examine their own ethical standards and belief systems.

Started at Harvard Business School (Harvard Full-Time MBA Profile) in May 2009, the MBA Oath has received both criticism and praise. At HBS, in this new academic year, there have already been several op-ed articles in the campus newspaper on both sides of the issue. We think this discourse is good. Members of the class of 2010 at HBS are now designing Town Hall meetings for students and faculty to engage in a constructive conversation. Importantly, student leaders from other campuses are getting involved, contributing diverse perspectives.

The Oath has succeeded in fueling a meaningful dialogue about integrity in business management. In the interest of advancing the conversation, we address four salient questions regarding the Oath's purpose and relevance.

Is the MBA Oath anti-business?

No. At the heart of the Oath is the deepest respect for capitalism and free enterprise as a means of creating value. The Oath asks leaders to "manage my enterprise in good faith, guarding against decisions and behavior that advance my own narrow ambitions but harm the enterprise and the societies it serves." This commitment is in the long-term interest of the enterprise and its shareholders.

Business leaders are stewards of enormous amounts of resources -- financial, human, and environmental. As rising business leaders, we sign and support the MBA Oath because we fundamentally believe business managers should be standard-bearers of ethics and professionalism. To sign the Oath is to acknowledge that our actions have far-reaching consequences in shaping society.

I'm an ethical person. Do I really need an oath?

A Harvard Business School professor, in his closing remarks following a case discussion on the financial crisis, told students: "Leadership is about protecting yourself and others in your organization from becoming morally disengaged." Even the most ethical among us make decisions in a world of relative standards: We evaluate, make, and rationalize choices using the people and institutions around us as benchmarks. In a world where all business leaders operate with the utmost integrity, relative standards would be enough. Unfortunately, business history has shown that relative standards gradually lead good people to make bad decisions, from the halls of Enron to the mortgage-backed securities desk.

To put this into context, Harvard Business School recently hosted two white collar criminals to share with students how a slippery slope landed them in federal prison for fraud. The lesson was that we "practice" making bad decisions through daily, seemingly inconsequential, unethical choices (adding \$5 to an expense reimbursement, for example). The felon reflected: "Through small acts, I built up a capability for making and rationalizing unethical decisions."

The MBA Oath offers a compelling alternative to relative standards -- a higher absolute standard that holds steadfast in a world of shifting relative ones. As one student explained after signing: "The Oath is a reminder of my own potential."

Will the Oath really affect my behavior, today and in 30 years?

Will having the Oath on your office wall or pocket-size in your wallet still keep you accountable in 30 years? Perhaps not. But we believe it can help.

Upon signing, MBAs are asked to post a statement on what the Oath means to them and are encouraged to designate accountability partners on whom they can rely for support. By publicly articulating a set of beliefs, signers will have exercised their "ethical muscles" in advance of adversity. □

NBR names 'Up in the Air' best film of the year

By JAKE COYLE,
AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK — “Up in the Air” is the National Board of Review’s pick for best film of the year.

Directed by Jason Reitman (“Juno,” “Thank You For Smoking”), the film stars George Clooney as a perpetually traveling contractor who fires people for a living. The National Board of Review also chose Clooney as best actor, an honor he shares with Morgan Freeman who plays Nelson Mandela in “Invictus.”

“Up in the Air” received a total of four awards. It also won best supporting actress for Anna Kendrick and best adapted screenplay, penned by Reitman and Sheldon Turner working from Walter Kirn’s book of the same name.

Already an Oscar favorite, the win boosts the awards prospects of “Up in the Air.” The last two winners — “No Country for Old Men” and “Slumdog Millionaire” — have gone on to win best picture at the Academy Awards.

Best director went to Clint Eastwood for “Invictus,” the story of Mandela’s embrace of the South African national rugby team.

Carey Mulligan was chosen best actress for her lead performance in “An Education,” a

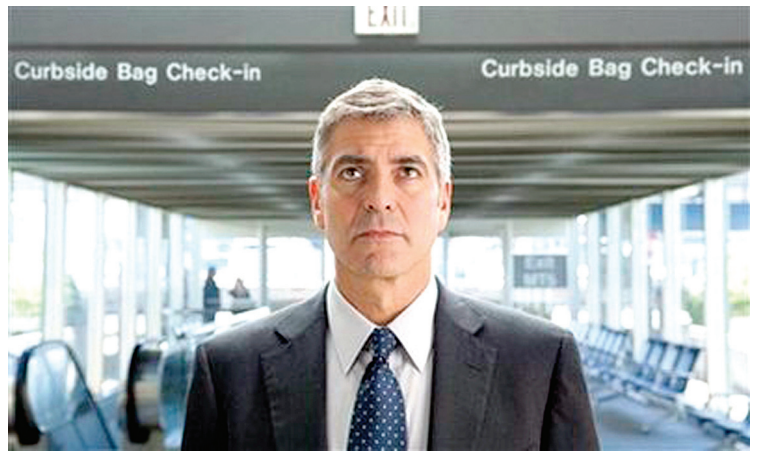
coming-of-age story set in 1960s London. Woody Harrelson won best supporting actor for “The Messenger.” In the film, the actor plays Captain Tony Stone, who is tasked to inform the families of fallen soldiers.

Best animated film went to Pixar’s “Up,” a riotous adventure about an elderly man who has always yearned for adventure and finds it plus more when he flies away in his house with a boy who has stowed away. “The Cove,” about the slaughter of dolphins in a Japanese village, won best documentary. The prison drama “A Prophet” won best foreign film.

Joel and Ethan Coen won best original screenplay for their script to “A Serious Man,” a black comedy set in the 1960s.

The NBR also singled out Wes Anderson for a special filmmaking achievement award for his stop-motion animated “The Fantastic Mr. Fox,” and cited Gabourey Sidibe for breakthrough performance by an actress for her performance in the title role of “Precious.”

The National Board of Review, which is composed of film historians, students and educators, was founded in 1909. The awards will be handed out Jan. 12 in a New York gala hosted by Meredith Vieira. □



In this film publicity image released by Paramount, George Clooney portrays Ryan Bingham in a scene from ‘Up in the Air.’
(AP Photo/Paramount Pictures, Dale Robinette)

Oliver Stone: Greed is legal in ‘Wall Street 2’

By BRETT ZONGKER,
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Hollywood filmmaker Oliver Stone is again taking on the financial world in a sequel to 1987’s successful “Wall Street,” but this time he said greed is not only good — it’s legal.

Stone just finished filming “Wall Street 2” and dropped a few hints while talking to a class at American University late Wednesday that focuses on his work.

The movie again stars Michael Douglas as corporate raider Gordon Gekko, a character who preached “greed is good” and earned Douglas an Academy Award in 1988. But this time Gekko takes a back seat to what Stone said are today’s financial power players.

“The individual Gekko would no longer exist in this new Wall Street,” Stone told The Associated Press, referring to the boom before the recent financial meltdown. “The big players now are major banks and hedge funds ... the money’s too big.”

In the new film, he said, “greed is now legal.”

The Federal Reserve Bank

has a role, and Donald Trump has a cameo appearance. The film also touches on current politics, Stone said.

The movie, due out next year, is a complicated but familiar story with greed and envy as central themes, Stone told about 75 students in the “Oliver Stone’s America” course, which also focuses on how popular historical consciousness is shaped. “Wall Street can be the engine of capitalism” and create opportunity, Stone said to one student. “But they increasingly have not done that because there’s more money in speculation.”

Stone, 63, said he made the first “Wall Street” for his father, who was a stock broker, and as a symbol of an era of excess that only grew after the 1980s. Millionaires became billionaires in the decades that followed, and the U.S. government provided a staggering bailout this year after everything crashed, Stone said.

“I don’t think it’s healthy,” he said, “and I don’t think I’m the only one.”

True to form, Stone also hammered other parts of



FILE - In this file photo from Sept. 20, 2009, Oliver Stone is seen on the set of ‘Wall Street 2’ in the meat packing district in New York. Stone will speak at American University on Dec. 2, 2009.

(AP Photo/Donald Traill)

society, including the media for not challenging the government enough, the defense industry and President Barack Obama. Ramping up the war in Afghanistan, Stone said, could be the beginning of the end for the United States.

“This is a huge turning point,” Stone told the class. “It’s ironic a so-called liberal president would be the one to screw the lid on the coffin.”

The students studied Stone’s work and read essays from his critics over the past several months, said Alyssa Pridgen, a 21-year-old senior from Baltimore. □

Roman Polanski moved, for privacy, ahead of prison release



TV screens show Roman Polanski in one of his films at the Corso cinema during the 5th Zurich Film Festival in Zurich in this September 27, 2009 file photo.

REUTERS/Sebastian Derungs

ZURICH (Reuters) — Film director Roman Polanski has been moved from a prison near Zurich to an undisclosed location in a bid to keep private his release on bail on Friday, the Swiss Justice Ministry said.

“He’s been taken to another place to protect his privacy and for safety reasons,” ministry spokesman Folco Galli said on Thursday.

He declined to give details on where Polanski had been taken but confirmed he would spend his house arrest, which will begin Friday, at his chalet in the skiing resort of Gstaad.

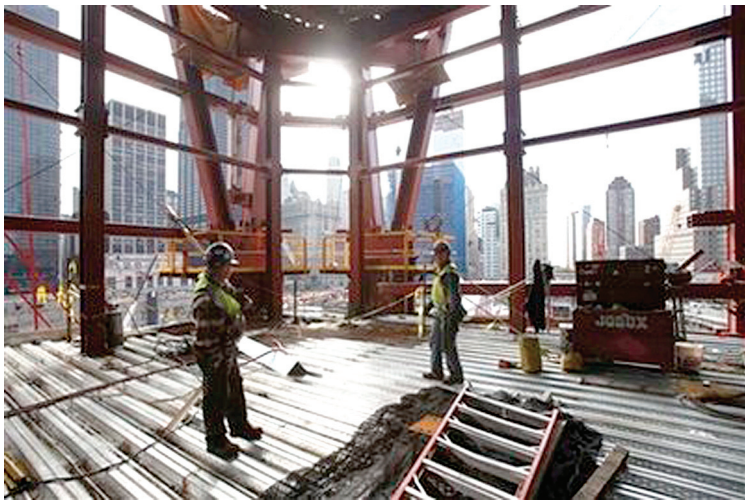
“Transferring him to Gstaad will take place tomorrow,” Galli said.

Polanski is fighting extradition to face U.S. sentencing over a 1977 case of unlawful sex with a 13-year-old girl. He pleaded guilty to one count of sex with a minor but fled before the case was concluded, fearing a heavy sentence.

The 76-year-old Oscar-winning director, who holds dual French and Polish citizenship, was arrested at the request of the United States when he flew into Switzerland on September 26.

The Swiss Justice Department is expected to decide on Polanski’s possible extradition within weeks but he could appeal, potentially dragging out the dispute for months.

Polanski’s films include “The Pianist” in 2002 for which he won an Academy Award, “Rosemary’s Baby” and “Chinatown.” □



In this photo made Tuesday, Nov. 17, 2009, work continues on the construction of One World Trade Center. The Labor Department on Thursday, Dec. 3, 2009 said productivity was rising at an annual rate of 8.1 percent in July-September period, the biggest jump since 2003, while unit labor costs were falling at a 2.5 percent rate.

(AP Photo/Mark Lennihan)

Service sector activity, retail sales disappoint

By TALI ARBEL,
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK — Further evidence that the economic recovery will be a slow and bumpy one emerged Thursday with reports that service sector activity and retail sales unexpectedly shrank in November as consumers held back on purchases.

The government did report one positive sign: New jobless claims dropped for a fifth straight week. But productivity gains in the third quarter showed that employers are managing to squeeze more work out of fewer workers. That's an ominous sign for the nearly 16 million Americans looking for jobs — and for many others who fear losing theirs.

The government is expected to report Friday that employers shed 130,000 jobs in November and that the unemployment rate will remain at 10.2 percent. Companies have been laying off fewer workers. But they have yet to ramp up hiring, and the jobless rate is expected to keep climbing into next year.

President Barack Obama kicked off a White House jobs forum on Thursday by saying he is "open to every demonstrably good idea" to reverse the rising tide of job losses. But with limited government resources, the private sector ultimately will have to lead.

"We have to be surgical and we're going to have to be creative," Obama said, appealing to his audience of academics, business and union leaders, and local officials to help him find "the biggest bang for the buck."

Meanwhile, the Institute for Supply Management's service sector index dropped to 48.7 from 50.6 in October. Analysts polled by Thomson Reuters had expected a level of 51.1. Any reading below 50 signals contraction. The service sector had begun growing in September for the first time in 13 months.

The ISM measure tracks more than 80 percent of the country's economic activity, including such diverse industries as health care, retail, financial services and transportation.

The trade group said employment shrank for the 22nd time in the last 23 months, albeit at a slightly slower pace. □

Poor report on services saps stock market gains

By TIM PARADIS
and IEVA M. AUGSTUMS,
AP Business Writers

NEW YORK — Investors didn't make any big bets on stocks after a weak snapshot of the service industry revived worries about the economy's ability to recover.

Major stock indicators were mixed and traded in a tight range Thursday after the Institute for Supply Management said its index of activity in the service industry fell to 48.7 in November from 50.6 in October. That's well below the 51.5 figure analysts had been expecting and signals contraction.

The market rose at the start of trading following a Labor Department report that new claims for unemployment benefits fell unexpectedly for the fifth straight week and Bank of America Corp.'s announcement late Wednesday that it would repay its \$45 billion in government bailout money. The government said the number of laid-off workers seeking unemployment benefits fell by 5,000 last week to 457,000, in a hopeful sign of improvement in the job market. Economists had expected an increase, according to a survey by Thomson Reuters. The report comes a day ahead of the government's November unemployment report.

Financial stocks got some support from Bank of America's plans to repay what it owes the government. The bank, which has been struggling to find a new CEO because of the restrictions on executive pay that accompanied the bailout, said late Wednesday it will raise more than \$18 billion in capital to help fund the repayment. Bank of America said it



FILE - In this Nov. 10, 2009 file photo, trader Andrew Walsh, left, works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. Major stock indicators traded mixed Thursday, Dec. 3, 2009, after the Institute for Supply Management said its index of activity in the service industry fell to 48.7 in November from 50.6 in October.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew, File)

expected the move would help it recruit a successor to the retiring Ken Lewis.

Investors are seeing the bank's move as a sign of its increasing strength and that economic conditions are improving.

Tim Knepp, chief investment officer of Genworth Financial Asset Management, said the market is pausing ahead of Friday's jobs report. Economists expect that employers cut 130,000 jobs last month and that the unemployment rate remained flat at 10.2 percent.

"It's understandable that the market would tread water at this point," he said. "Job creation is going to be the key to sustaining any kind of rally." In midafternoon trading, the Dow Jones industrial average slipped 3.55, or less than 0.1 percent, to 10,449.13. The broader Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 0.53, or 0.1 percent, to 1,109.77, while the Nasdaq composite index rose 8.49, or 0.4 percent, to

2,193.52.

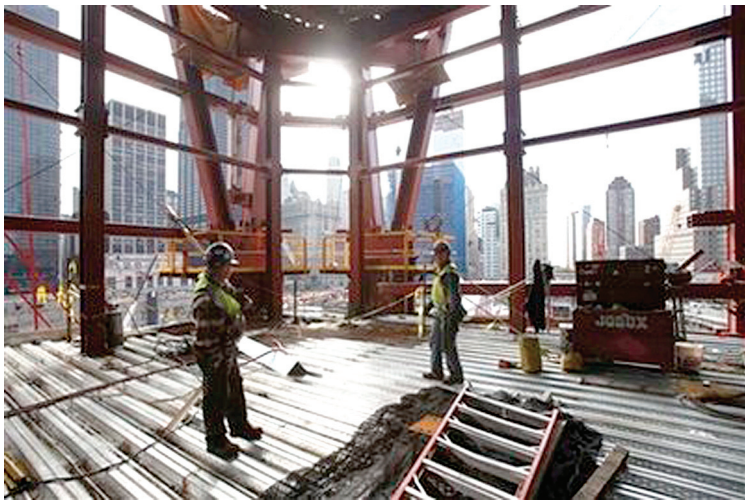
Bond prices fell, pushing yields higher. The yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note rose to 3.39 percent from 3.32 percent late Wednesday.

The dollar mostly rose against other major currencies, while gold fell.

Crude oil rose 2 cents to \$76.62 on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

Burt White, chief investment officer at LPL Financial in Boston, said the occasional downbeat economic reports aren't likely to derail the market as investors continue to see longer-term improvements in the economy.

"We do hit some speed bumps on the road and today we hit a couple, especially with ISM, but we're still pretty bullish that stocks have a way to go," he said. The day's trading was subdued as Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke appeared on Capitol Hill as he seeks to win confirmation for a second four-year term. □



In this photo made Tuesday, Nov. 17, 2009, work continues on the construction of One World Trade Center. The Labor Department on Thursday, Dec. 3, 2009 said productivity was rising at an annual rate of 8.1 percent in July-September period, the biggest jump since 2003, while unit labor costs were falling at a 2.5 percent rate.

(AP Photo/Mark Lennihan)

Service sector activity, retail sales disappoint

By TALI ARBEL,
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK — Further evidence that the economic recovery will be a slow and bumpy one emerged Thursday with reports that service sector activity and retail sales unexpectedly shrank in November as consumers held back on purchases.

The government did report one positive sign: New jobless claims dropped for a fifth straight week. But productivity gains in the third quarter showed that employers are managing to squeeze more work out of fewer workers. That's an ominous sign for the nearly 16 million Americans looking for jobs — and for many others who fear losing theirs.

The government is expected to report Friday that employers shed 130,000 jobs in November and that the unemployment rate will remain at 10.2 percent. Companies have been laying off fewer workers. But they have yet to ramp up hiring, and the jobless rate is expected to keep climbing into next year.

President Barack Obama kicked off a White House jobs forum on Thursday by saying he is "open to every demonstrably good idea" to reverse the rising tide of job losses. But with limited government resources, the private sector ultimately will have to lead.

"We have to be surgical and we're going to have to be creative," Obama said, appealing to his audience of academics, business and union leaders, and local officials to help him find "the biggest bang for the buck."

Meanwhile, the Institute for Supply Management's service sector index dropped to 48.7 from 50.6 in October. Analysts polled by Thomson Reuters had expected a level of 51.1. Any reading below 50 signals contraction. The service sector had begun growing in September for the first time in 13 months.

The ISM measure tracks more than 80 percent of the country's economic activity, including such diverse industries as health care, retail, financial services and transportation.

The trade group said employment shrank for the 22nd time in the last 23 months, albeit at a slightly slower pace. □

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Heavy surf slams into the 72-foot-tall Ram Island Ledge Light, Friday, Dec 3, 2009, at the mouth of Portland Harbor, in Portland, Maine. A quick moving storm with winds approaching 50 miles per hour brought record breaking warmth to Portland where the temperature reached 68 degrees

Associated Press

Health bill survives first big test — on Medicare

By DAVID ESPO

AP Special Correspondent

WASHINGTON—Unflinching on a critical first test, Senate Democrats closed ranks Thursday behind \$460 billion in politically risky Medicare cuts at the heart of health care legislation, thwarting a Republican attempt to doom President Barack Obama's sweeping overhaul.

The bid by the bill's critics to reverse cuts to the popular Medicare program failed on a vote of 58-42, drawing the support of two Democratic defectors.

Approval would have stripped out money needed to pay for expanding coverage to tens of millions of uninsured Americans.

The broader legislation aims to extend health coverage to 31 million who now lack it, while barring insurance industry practices such as denying coverage on the



Sen. Michael Bennet, D-Colo., second from left, gestures during a news conference on Capitol Hill in Washington, Wednesday, Dec. 2, 2009, to discuss a Medicare amendment. From left are, Sen. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, Bennett, Sen. Christopher Dodd, D-Conn., former Connecticut Rep. Barbara Kennelly, president and chief executive officer of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, and Ed Coyle, right, Executive Director of the Alliance for Retired Americans.

Associated Press

basis of pre-existing medical conditions.

Though the overhaul is estimated to cost about \$1 trillion over a decade, the Congressional Budget Office

has said it would cut federal deficits by \$130 billion over that period, and probably reduce them further in the 10 years beyond that.

Continued on Next Page

Secret Service puts 3 on leave over gate crashing



Secret Service Director Mark Sullivan testifies on Capitol Hill in Washington, Thursday, Dec. 3, 2009, before the House Homeland Security Committee hearing on a White House security breach.

Associated Press

EILEEN SULLIVAN,

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The head of the Secret Service asserted Thursday that the security breach at last week's White House state dinner was an aberration but has put three uniformed officers on leave. President Barack Obama says his confidence in the agency remains unshaken.

Continued on Page B3



U.S. murder suspect Amanda Knox is escorted by penitentiary police officers during a break in the trial at the court in Perugia, central Italy, Thursday, Dec. 3, 2009. Lawyers for American student Knox have one last day in court to convince a jury she is innocent of the murder of her British roommate.

Associated Press

Knox: I'm no murderer

ALESSANDRA RIZZO

MARTA FALCONI

Associated Press Writers

PERUGIA, Italy (AP) — American student Amanda Knox tried one last time Thursday to convince the Italian court trying her for murder that she is not a killer, urging jurors not to brand her with "the mask of an assassin."

Continued on Page B7



Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nev., right, and Sen. Barbara Mikulski, D-Md. meet with reporters on Capitol Hill in Washington, Tuesday, Dec. 1, 2009.

HEALTH BILL

Continued from Page B1

“Our bill does nothing to reduce guaranteed Medicare benefits,” said Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont., as several fellow Democrats accused Republican critics of making false claims of potential harm during three days of debate.

The AARP supported the 10-year package of cuts in projected spending, giving Democrats political cover for their decision to pare back subsidies to private Medicare plans as well as payments to hospitals, hospices, home health agencies and other providers.

Republicans disagreed vigorously. “Medicare is already in trouble. The program needs to be fixed, not raided to create another new government program,” said the party’s leader, Sen. Mitch McConnell of Kentucky.

The Medicare vote came not long after the Senate backed a guarantee for all insured women age 40 and older to receive mammograms with no out-of-pocket costs. The breast cancer screening test would be included in an array of preventive measures that insurance plans would be required to cover. The proposal cleared on a near party-line vote of 61-39, one more than the 60 needed for passage. It essentially wiped out a federal advisory committee recommendation to defer routine mammograms until women reach the age of 50.

The day’s votes were the first since the Senate’s health care debate began on Monday,

and demonstrated the ability of Democrats to move ahead in the face of implacable Republican opposition.

At the same time, Democrats worked in private meetings to settle controversies within the party that are still standing in the way of the bill’s passage.

The most contentious of these involves proposals for the government to sell insurance in competition with private companies, an approach supported by liberals but opposed by most Democratic moderates and conservatives.

“Our caucus is now in the process of negotiating with ourselves because we need all 60 of us to get this done,” said Sen. Mary Landrieu, D-La., after one closed-door meeting. Senate procedures require 60 votes to overcome Republican delaying tactics designed to kill the bill.

Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., said he expected all such issues to be worked out soon, but he did not specify precisely when.

For the time being, that left the two parties free to engage in an intensely political debate on health care, an issue that is certain to play a role in next year’s midterm elections.

Unwilling to allow Republican charges on Medicare to go unanswered, Democrats responded with an alternative that stated no guaranteed benefits would be cut from the program and its finances would be strengthened.

The lead proponent of that provision was Sen. Michael Bennet of Colorado, who was appointed to his seat earlier in the year and faces a difficult

campaign in 2010. “This is a message amendment,” his office informed fellow Democrats in an e-mail unintended for publication, indicating its purpose was political.

“The Senate bill already does these things and this amendment makes these facts absolutely clear and succinct.” It passed 100-0.

Sen. John McCain of Arizona, Obama’s Republican opponent in last year’s presidential race, laid bare the political nature of the debate by making a recording to be telephoned automatically to thousands of voters in states represented by Democrats, urging the deletion of the Medicare cuts. The calls were paid for by the National Republican Senatorial Committee and took aim at Bennet as well as Sens. Blanche Lincoln of Arkansas, who is seeking a new term next year, and Ben Nelson of Nebraska.

In the end, Nelson and Sen. Jim Webb of Virginia were the only Democrats to support McCain’s proposal.

On the other side, Republicans would not allow the Democrats to go unchallenged on women’s health with a proposal long backed by Sen. Barbara Mikulski requiring the government to develop a list of tests to be covered at no additional cost to the patient. On Wednesday, Sen. David Vitter, R-La., made it explicit that mammograms would be covered for women at age 40. More broadly, Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, backed an alternative that gave GOP senators opposed to the Democratic proposal a measure they could support. It urged the insurance industry to consult with medical experts in deciding what preventive tests to provide. But it provided no government guarantee that any would be required, and did not rule out co-pays for patients undergoing the procedures.

It failed on a vote of 59-41 with Nelson siding with the Republicans.

Political philosophy played a hidden role in the struggle over women’s health. Republicans have accused

Democrats for months of supporting a federal takeover of health care. Murkowski quietly shelved an earlier draft of her amendment that would have given the government authority to require additional preventive tests and raised the cost of the bill by \$30 billion over a decade. One Republican said conservatives objected, forcing the switch.

Overall, the \$1 trillion legislation would require most Americans to purchase insurance and provide federal subsidies to lower and middle income individuals and families to defray the cost. Businesses would not be required to provide coverage to their employees, but large firms would face a penalty if they did not and if any of their workers received federal subsidies.

Consumers would be allowed to shop for insurance in a new marketplace in which companies would compete for business by selling policies that provide benefits according to standards established by the federal government. □

Wife appeals for info on missing ex-FBI agent

By MATTHEW LEE

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON – The wife of a retired FBI agent missing in Iran for nearly three years is making an impassioned appeal for information about her husband as she prepares for a somber milestone in his disappearance.

Thursday marks the 1,000th day since Robert Levinson went missing on Iran’s Kish Island and repeated calls to Iranian authorities about his whereabouts and condition from both the family and the U.S. government have yielded nothing. Now, more than ever, Christine Levinson is desperate to know what happened to him.

“The past 1,000 days have been a nightmare from which my children and I struggle daily to wake,” she said. “Bob has missed his own birthday celebrations with us three times. He is 61 now, and we do not even know if he is in good health.”

“I am a stay-at-home mother of seven children who wants to find her husband of 35 years and bring him home,” she said in a statement made available to The AP on the eve of the anniversary of his disappearance. “My family and I have no interest in any other issue concerning Iran. We are pleading for a humanitarian gesture from those who can help us.”

Christine Levinson, of Coral Springs, Fla., plans to meet officials in Washington to discuss

the case on Thursday. She has traveled to New York to see Iranian officials and even visited Iran seeking information about her husband. All with no result.

Her comments came as Iran on Wednesday freed five British sailors who it detained a week ago after their racing yacht drifted accidentally into Iranian waters in the Persian Gulf. Britain said it was delighted with the release and praised Tehran’s handling of the incident.

The U.S. government has not had similar success. Appeals for information from the White House and State Department over two administrations have also produced little but Iranian claims to have no knowledge of Levinson and pledges to investigate that appear to have been unfulfilled.

Levinson is one of several American citizens currently missing or detained in Iran, including three young hikers who were arrested near the Iraqi border in July, whose cases have been raised with Iran by U.S. officials either directly or indirectly through Swiss diplomats who represent U.S. interests in Iran.

“We continue to call on Iran to stand by its commitment of providing full details about their investigation both to the Levinson family and to the Swiss Embassy in Tehran,” State Department spokesman Mark Toner said Wednesday. □

SECRET SERVICE
Continued from Page B1

The chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee, Rep. Bennie Thompson, said the country is fortunate the affair in honor of visiting Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh did not end in a "night of horror."

Meantime in an interview at the White House, Obama said that even though "the system didn't work the way it was supposed to" last week, he still feels safe in the mansion and trust the agency fully to protect not only him but his wife and children.

"I could not have more confidence in the Secret Service," Obama told USA TODAY and the Detroit Free Press.

Appearing before Thompson's panel for questioning, Sullivan acknowledged his officers made mistakes and that the Secret Service must have a "100 percent" performance record.

Thompson, a Democrat, also said that Congress needs to talk not only to Tareq and Michael Salahi, the couple who got in without invitations, but also to White House social secretary Desiree Rogers. All three have declined to appear. Thompson said he is likely to authorize a subpoena for the Salahis to testify.

Rep. Pete King, the panel's top Republican, accused the White

House of "stonewalling" in not permitting Rogers to appear. The congressman said he thinks the White House is either afraid of something or doesn't want to take any heat for last week's incident.

Thompson said at midday that the Salahis could be cited for contempt of Congress if they continue to shun the committee's request that they proceed. He said he has asked staff to prepare subpoenas for the pair, and said "my door remains open." King indicated he would continue to press for Rogers to appear as well. The two appeared to differ on whether Rogers should be subpoenaed.

Thompson said at the outset: "This hearing is not about crashing a party at the White House. Nor is it about wannabe celebrities." He said the purpose is to better protect the president.

The Salahis have been trying to land a part on a television reality show, "The Real Housewives of D.C.," and were filmed by the TV show around town as they prepared for the White House dinner.

"We're not concerned about agency embarrassment," Thompson said. "We're all fortunate that this diplomatic celebration did not become a night of horror. ... We must dissect every fact ... and after we do these things, we need to give thanks that no lives were

lost," he said.

Said Sullivan: "In our judgment, a mistake was made. In our line of work, we cannot afford even one mistake."

"I fully acknowledge that the proper procedures were not followed," he said. " ... This flaw has not changed our agency's standard, which is to be right 100 percent of the time."

Thompson asked Sullivan what went wrong.

"Pure and simple, this was human error" in which normal security protocols were not followed, Sullivan said. The breach was not caused by poor screening technology, he added.

The Secret Service chief said the investigation so far has found three people from the agency's uniformed officer division responsible for the security breach and all three have been put on administrative leave. He added that the agency is still reviewing what security protocols weren't followed.

"What we find is if the protocols are followed, we would not run into this situation," Sullivan said.

Asked whether there was a risk posed to people attending the dinner for the visiting prime minister of India, Sullivan said he was confident there wasn't. Sullivan said there was no threat to Obama, noting that "last week we took him to a basketball game, and



Secret Service Director Mark Sullivan testifies on Capitol Hill in Washington, Thursday, Dec. 3, 2009, before the House Homeland Security Committee hearing on a White House security breach. A placard for Michael Salahi is seen on a stack of placards on a nearby table during the hearing.

Associated Press

there was 5,000 people sitting around the president."

In response to a question he said Obama had not had an extraordinary number of threats against his life, contrary to her assertion, and said that Obama had received

no more such threats at this point in his term than his two predecessors.

White House press secretary Robert Gibbs earlier this week described both Obama and his wife, Michelle, as angered by the incident. □

Pilot who was tortured at 'Hanoi Hilton' dies

HOLBROOK MOHR

Associated Press Writer

JACKSON, Mississippi (AP) — Retired U.S. Air Force Col. Jack Pitchford, a fighter pilot who survived seven years in the notorious Vietnamese prison camp known as the "Hanoi Hilton," has died. He was 82.

The Mississippi native died Wednesday after battling a brain tumor, said his brother, Jim Pitchford.

Pitchford was shot down over North Vietnam in 1965 and taken to Hoa Lo prison, a hellish place where many Americans, including U.S. Sen. John McCain and Medal of Honor recipient George "Bud" Day, endured brutal torture.

Pitchford was released in 1973, the same year as McCain, who was imprisoned there in 1967 after his own plane was shot down. The pilot never fully recovered from his injuries, but never regretted his service to his country, his brother said.

"His achievement in life was really sustaining himself through the ordeal in prison camp, and he considered himself a very fierce resister,"

Jim Pitchford said, recalling a story another prisoner told him about his brother.

"One day (in the prison), when it was his time to offer the blessing at a group meal, he said, 'Lord, we thank you for this dog s--- we're about to consume and we ask that you come down and smite these heathen bastards.'"

Pitchford attended Louisiana State University on the GI bill after World War II, then entered the Air Force's officer training program. He missed combat in both World War II and Korea because of training assignments, his brother said.

Pitchford volunteered for a perilous assignment in Vietnam with the Wild Weasels, a group of pilots who flew low-altitude missions hunting down and destroying surface-to-air missiles.

Pitchford became the first Weasel pilot taken prisoner after bailing out of his F-100 Super Sabre on Dec. 20, 1965, according to his brother and Air Force records.

Pitchford was shot in the arm three times and the man flying with him, Bob Trier, was killed in a gun battle on the ground, Jim Pitchford said. □

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Obama open to every good idea to stop job losses



In this Dec. 1, 2009 file photo, President Barack Obama speaks at West Point, N.Y. Under pressure from Republicans and an impatient public to fix the sputtering economic recovery, President Barack Obama is refocusing on this politically potent issue by talking job creation with business and labor leaders at the White House.

to have to be creative." Obama appealed to his audience of academics, business and union leaders and local officials to help him find "the biggest bang for the buck."

Obama said chronic unemployment is "a struggle that cuts deep and touches people across the nation."

Seeking to set a can-do tone, he claimed progress has been made toward an economic recovery since the depths of the recession last winter, while saying much more work needs to be done.

Obama said the leading question of the day is "how do we get businesses to start hiring again" and asked his guests to "bring their A-game."

He spoke a day ahead of the release of government figures on unemployment. The jobless rate now is 10.2 percent, the highest since the early 1980s, and most economists believe Friday's report will show it still above 10 percent, perhaps still rising.

Earlier, the leader of the House of Representatives, Speaker Nancy Pelosi, a Democrat, suggested that one way to create jobs is to use leftover money from the Wall Street bailout to pay for new spending on roads and bridges and save the jobs of firefighters, teachers and other public employees.

Republicans staged their own jobs forum across town, inviting a team of mostly

conservative economists to a round-table discussion.

"I don't think there is a moment to lose. I think we have to move aggressively toward policies that actually promote jobs.

And so far what's been tried hasn't worked very well," said Lawrence Lindsey, a top economic adviser early in the administration of President George W. Bush.

Douglas Holtz-Eakin, a former head of the Congressional Budget Office who had been 2008 Republican nominee Sen. John McCain's chief economic adviser, said that the single best thing Obama could do to create jobs was "to reverse course on a dangerous agenda of debt-financed spending, crippling regulation, expensive mandates, and intrusive government expansion."

Obama told his audience: "I'll be looking for some good answers." After his opening remarks, the group broke into smaller study groups. Obama planned to address the entire group again at day's end.

The president acknowledged there was considerable skepticism about government's ability to overcome the employment challenge and even over whether "any discussion like this can produce results."

But he said he thinks skepticism can be healthy and "I am confident that we will make progress." □

Associated Press

PHILIP ELLIOTT

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama kicked off a White House jobs forum on Thursday by saying he's "open to every demonstrably good idea" to reverse the worst job losses in the U.S. in decades. But Obama said the government's resources are limited and that growth ultimately must come from the private sector.

"So we can't make any ill considered decisions right now even with the best of intentions," he said. "We have to be surgical and we're going

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Rain, winds, record heat hit Northeast on same day

By DAVID SHARP

Associated Press Writer

PORTLAND, Maine — A storm packing blustery winds and driving rain knocked out power to thousands of homes and businesses in the Northeast on Thursday before giving way to sunny skies and record high temperatures — all in the same morning. Utility officials reported sporadic power outages from Maine to New Jersey after wind knocked down trees and power lines early Thursday. Winds reached up to 49 mph in Brunswick, Maine, while the Isle of Shoals off the coast of New Hampshire recorded a 61 mph gust. In New Jersey, wind speeds topped out at 45 mph.

But the rain and wind that battered the region early Thursday gave way to sunny skies and unseasonably high temperatures by mid-morning.

In Boston, the temperature hit 69 degrees, breaking the old record of 65 set in 1932. In Portland, the temperature climbed to 68 degrees — crushing the old high of 55 for the date. Providence, R.I., had a record high of 66, and Concord, N.H., set a record at 65.

“It’s not right. It’s December. It’s supposed to be snowing,” said Jennifer Sporzynski, who sat on a park bench Thursday in Portland’s Old Port. “I like warm weather — but not in December.”

But for others, the balmy weather was just fine.

In Boston, joggers ran downtown in shorts and T-shirts, while walkers strolled through the city with jackets tied around their waists.

David Montero, 36, exited his Downtown Crossing apartment Thursday morning wearing a heavy coat to walk his 2-year-old Boston Terrier named Bolt. “I personally would take this all week, if we could

have it,” Montero said as he watched Bolt play with two other dogs in the Boston Common.

Still, Montero said he couldn’t get over the sight of seeing people in the grassy park exercising in shorts. “Totally bizarre,” he said.

For many, the day started with lashing rain. Central Maine Power, the state’s largest electric utility, reported 6,700 customers in the dark at the storm’s peak. In New Jersey, more than 10,000 homes and businesses lost electricity. Other northeastern states, including New Hampshire, also suffered power outages.

High winds disrupted

some ferry services from Cape Cod to the islands of Martha’s Vineyard and Nantucket. Two scheduled passenger ferries and a freight ferry from Hyannis to Nantucket were canceled Thursday morning, while ferries from Woods Hole to Martha’s Vineyard were running on a trip-by-trip basis, the Steamship Authority reported.

Heavy waves pounded the shore, causing beach erosion up and down the Atlantic coast. Coastal flooding closed several roads in New Hampshire at high tide late Thursday morning.

Jim Brown from the National Weather Service says the cooldown will be nearly as swift as the arrival



Westport, Mass., Highway Department worker Chris Gonsalves uses a front loader to clear rocks from a coastal road in Westport, Thursday, Dec. 3, 2009. The rocks were deposited on the roadway by strong surf and high winds from a storm that passed through the area early Thursday. National Weather Service meteorologist Bill Simpson said the temperature hit 67 degrees Thursday morning in Boston, breaking the old record of 65 set in 1932.

Associated Press

of the record warmth. is expected by the weekend. Seasonably cooler weather in the Northeast. □

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Peru police clash with mine raid suspects, two dead

CARLA SALAZAR

Associated Press Writer

LIMA, Peru (AP) — Police shot and killed two peasants in northern Peru as they tried to arrest suspects in a brutal attack on a mining camp, officials said Thursday.

Three police and five civilians were wounded in the shootout.

Police said they were ambushed when they went to the village of Segunda y Cajas to arrest seven men suspected in the murder of three Rio Blanco Copper employees during an attack on the remote, Chinese-owned mining camp last month. Peasant leaders say the police made an unprovoked attack on Wednesday.

Police had already arrested two men before the incident, Rivera said.

Police made no further arrests and Rivera did not

describe the civilians killed or wounded in the clash as suspects. Police headquarters in Lima declined to give more information.

Segunda y Cajas leader Segundo Aponte said police shot on unarmed civilians and said that the wounded include an old woman who tried to protect a young man from arrest.

“They barged in without respecting a thing and shot up the place.

There are bullet holes all over the village’s posts, roofs and walls,” Aponte said.

“The peasants don’t have firearms, their weapons are whips, sometimes they use rocks and slings, but they don’t know anything else,” Aponte told the Associated Press by telephone from the village 520 miles north of Peru’s capital.

Peasants in the region have longed opposed the Rio Blanco project for fear of contamination and

depleted water supplies. Human rights groups accuse police and private guards of torturing protesters at the camp in 2005, when it had different ownership.

“The mining company entered illegally to usurp communal lands and they’ve caused ecological and social damage,” Aponte said.

The peasant communities deny participating in the Nov. 1 raid on the mining camp when as many as 20 men armed with pistols and rifles killed two security guards and the mine’s administrator.

Mining conflicts are common in Peru, where the central government owns rights to subsoil resources and grants mining companies concessions to minerals under communal lands

SCHEDULE FOR WEEK OF DECEMBER 3 - DECEMBER 9

*matinee: saturday & sunday | late show: friday and saturday

AT RENAISSANCE - ORANJESTAD

R	NINJA ASSASSINS	daily: 1:30	4:00	6:30	8:45	NEW
	matinee:	1:30		late show:	11:00	
G	THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG	daily: 12:00	4:30	6:45		NEW
	matinee:	12:00	2:15	late show:		
R	PRECIOUS	daily: 7:00	9:30		12:00	
	matinee:		late show:			
R	NEX DAY AIR	daily: 9:00			11:00	
	matinee:		late show:			
PG	OLD DOGS	daily: 4:15	6:15	8:15	10:15	
	matinee:	12:15	2:15	late show:	12:15	
PG-13	2012	daily: 12:45	4:15	7:45	11:15	
	matinee:	12:45		late show:		
G	SINTERKLAAS EN DE VERDWENEN PAKJESBOOT	daily: 4:45				
	matinee:	12:15	2:30	late show:		
PG-13	THE TWILIGHT SAGA: NEW MOON	daily: 6:00	9:00			
	matinee:	12:15	3:00	late show:	11:45	

AT PASEO HERENCIA

PG-13	EVERYBODY'S FINE	daily: matinee:	12:00	4:30 2:15	6:45 late show:	9:00 11:15	NEW
G	THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG	daily: matinee:	12:15	4:45 2:30	late show:		NEW
PG-13	THE TWILIGHT SAGA: NEW MOON	daily: matinee:	12:00	5:30 2:45	8:30 late show:	11:30	
R	LAW ABIDING CITIZEN	daily: matinee:			9:15 late show:	12:00	
PG-13	2012	daily: matinee:	1:00	4:30	8:00 late show:	11:15	
PG-13	COUPLES RETREAT	daily: matinee:		7:15	9:45 late show:	12:15	
PG-13	WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE	daily: matinee:	12:30	5:00 2:45	late show:		
R	PARANORMAL ACTIVITY	daily: matinee:		7:00	9:15 late show:	11:30	
PG	A CHRISTMAS CAROL 3D	daily: matinee:	12:15	4:45 2:30	7:00 late show:		



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KNOX MURDERER

Continued from Page B1

Knox spoke at the end of a trial that has exposed some of the most intimate details of her life, with prosecutors depicting her as a promiscuous and manipulative she-devil who brutally murdered her British roommate in Perugia, Meredith Kercher.

The trial, in which Knox's ex-boyfriend Raffaele Sollecito figures as a co-defendant, is wrapping up after almost a year. Thursday's session was devoted to rebuttals by defense lawyers and the prosecution, and the eight members of the jury are expected to begin deliberations as early as Friday.

Standing up, her voice breaking as she fought back tears, the 22-year-old American told the court that she feels "vulnerable" and fears losing herself after two years in jail.

"I have written on a piece of paper ... that I was afraid of losing myself," she said, speaking Italian. "I am scared of being branded what I am not," she said. "I am scared of having the mask of an assassin forced onto me."

Knox and Sollecito, an Italian, are charged with murder and sexual assault in the 2007 slaying. Prosecutors are seeking life sentences, while both defendants are pleading innocent. Any verdict can be appealed by both parties.

Both Knox, a 22-year-old student from Seattle, and Sollecito, 25, have been jailed since shortly after the slaying.

The brutal murder has made headlines worldwide, bringing the lives of the defendants under the spotlight. Sordid details of sex and drugs have been dug by the media that have descended on this university town as much as discussed in court.

The jury, which includes two judges, is not sequestered.

During the trial, about a hundred witnesses have taken the stand in the frescoed rooms just steps away from the medieval fountain that is a symbol of the town: relatives of the victim described Kercher's love of Italy, her friends spoke of the last hours before she died, acquaintances described the relations between the two women.

Knox herself has taken the witness stand, giving a composed testimony months ago during which she called the victim a friend and offered her alibi, saying she spent the night at Sollecito's house where the two watched a video.

According to the prosecution, Kercher and Knox had different personalities — the victim a serious student; the alleged murderer a promiscuous youth of dubious hygiene — and had grown apart so much that Knox wanted to get back at her for being "smug."

The prosecutors contend that on the night of the murder, Nov. 1, 2007, Knox and Sollecito met at the apartment where Kercher and Knox lived. They say a fourth person was there, Rudy Hermann Guede, an Ivory Coast citizen

who has been convicted in the murder and sentenced to 30 years in prison. Guede, who is appealing his conviction, maintains he was in the house the night of the murder but did not kill Kercher.

The prosecution says that Knox and Kercher started arguing and the three brutally attacked and sexually assaulted the Briton. They were acting, according to the prosecution, under "the fumes of drugs and possibly alcohol."

Kercher's body, her throat slit, was found in a pool of blood the next day at the apartment.

Francesco Maresca, a lawyer representing Kercher's family, argued in his rebuttals Thursday that the Briton was killed because she knew her murderers and would be a threat to them if she survived. "Meredith died because after she was attacked, threatened, wounded, and after a violent sexual approach, they needed her to remain silent," he said.

Knox says Kercher was a friend whose death shocked her. Defense lawyers have described her as a smart, cheerful woman, at one point even comparing her to film character Amelie, the innocent and dreamy girl in the 2001 French movie of the same title. That is the film Knox and Sollecito say they were watching on his computer the night of the murder.

Sollecito, also addressing the court Thursday, insisted that no motive had emerged to explain his alleged role in the slaying. He disputed the prosecution's view that he was submissive



toward Amanda and had been manipulated by her.

"Not having found a motive to explain why I would kill, they said I was a sort of dog on a leash," he said. "If Amanda had asked me to do something I didn't agree with, I would have said no. Let alone if she had asked me to do something as terrible as killing a girl."

DNA traces that the prosecutors have linked to the defendants have been disputed in court. The defense lawyers contend that traces are either too small to be attributed with certainty or that evidence may have been inadvertently contaminated.

The prosecution maintains that a 6 1/2-inch knife they found at Sollecito's house

could be the murder weapon. The knife has Kercher's DNA on the blade and Knox's on the handle, they say.

But defense lawyers argue that the knife is too big to match Kercher's wounds and that the amount of what prosecutors say is Kercher's DNA is too low to be attributed with certainty.

The defense has largely focused on the lack of evidence and what they say is the absence of a clear motive.

"We all are hopeful and we trust these judges and the jury to know that they are going to not put two innocent kids in jail for a crime that they didn't commit," Knox's mother, Edda Mellas, told reporters after the hearing. □

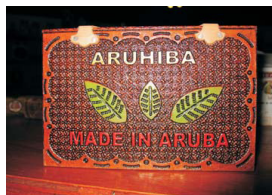
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ORANJESTAD- Benjamin Petrocchi started the newest export product of Aruba, locally produced cigars called "Aruhiba". These cigars are produced and cultivated in Aruba.



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Putin talks of possible return to presidency



Russian President Vladimir Putin speaks during a question-and-answer session broadcast live by Russia's state television in Moscow, Thursday, Dec. 3, 2009. The show sent another strong signal that Putin remains the dominant force in Russian politics, overshadowing his designated successor, President Dmitry Medvedev.

Associated Press

DAVID NOWAK,
Associated Press Writer

MOSCOW (AP) — Wagging his pen and gazing directly into the camera, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin sent his strongest signal yet Thursday that he plans to return to Russia's presidency, telling millions of TV viewers that he will consider running in 2012.

The former KGB spy, who retains huge power despite formally stepping down after his eight-year presidency in 2008, turned in an electric performance during his annual marathon call-in show — cementing his high rating among the electorate and his reputation as Russia's No. 1 leader.

Asked if he was leaving the political stage, Putin grinned and said: "Don't hold your breath."

The St. Petersburg native declared he would "think about it, there is still enough time," when questioned on his intent to run again for president.

Although his words were short of an outright declaration, the fact that he would admit to considering a run underlined his steely ambition. There is almost no doubt Putin would win — because of his genuine popularity and the overwhelming political dominance of his United

Russia party.

"While he coyly said it's too early for a decision, it certainly looked like he has already decided" to return to the presidency in 2012, said Nikolai Petrov, an analyst with the Carnegie Moscow Center.

President Dmitry Medvedev, on a visit to Italy, told reporters after the call-in show that "if Putin doesn't rule out running, neither do I rule myself out" for 2012. He also said that he and Putin will act as "responsible politicians" and reach agreement on the 2012 election to avoid "elbowing one another" — echoing previous comments by Putin.

Putin's demeanor was no less presidential than any of his appearances from 2000 to 2008. He switched tones effortlessly from coarse to lighthearted, from flippant to wise.

In dealing with questions from a mostly sycophantic audience in the slick, stage-managed event, Putin was at times the efficient bureaucrat, concerned father and learned economist.

A return to the president's corner office in the Kremlin would mark an end to the power-sharing arrangement he engineered with Medvedev.

Putin, 57, has remained

Russia's consummate leader since constitutional term limits forced him to step down in 2008. He named Medvedev as his anointed successor and, shortly after the election, Medvedev named him prime minister.

The premiership had been a comparatively low-profile position, but Putin has pushed it into the spotlight, logging more TV time in the Medvedev era than the president himself. Medvedev has appeared to be little more than a figurehead and placeholder.

In the past year, Medvedev has made tentative forays out of Putin's long shadow, with somewhat veiled criticisms of the corruption that plagued Russia under Putin. But his mild manners and legalistic, often-opaque remarks have been no match for Putin's vigorous, tough-guy image and slangy remarks.

Putin didn't disappoint during the four-hour call-in show Thursday, deriding Russians who flaunt their wealth.

"There are those so-called nouveau-riche — those who suddenly got rich and don't know how to behave," he said, noting that in Soviet times, gold-capped teeth were considered the way to show you were well-off.

"Well, these Lamborghinis and other such frivolous knickknacks are just like those same gold teeth. People who flaunt their wealth against a background of the humble lives of millions of Russians don't differ in any way from the people who boast about their gold teeth," Putin said, obviously enjoying the limelight.

Viewers posed what officials said was about 2 million questions by telephone, Internet and SMS, most of which went unanswered. If they felt exhausted by the end of the program, Putin showed no sign of fading.

He opened with his strongest suit — domestic security — by denouncing last week's bombing of a Moscow-to-St. Petersburg passenger train

that killed 26 people.

"We have done a lot to break the spine of terrorism, but the threat is still here," Putin said. "The entire society, all of us must be aware of that threat."

Putin rose to prominence early in his first stint as premier in 1999 by launching Russia's second full-scale war against Chechen separatists, whom officials blamed for a devastating series of apartment-block bombings in Moscow and other cities. Small clashes persist in Chechnya and violence rose sharply in the North Caucasus region this summer.

The train bombing, the first fatal terrorist attack outside the Caucasus in five years, angered and unsettled Russians and is likely to increase their yearning for a leader unhesitant to take brutal measures.

Putin's return to the Kremlin would likely wipe out any outside chance of significant political reforms. Medvedev's liberal statements have brought little result and analyst Petrov said he clearly has no mandate to make significant steps toward greater democracy.

Putin also focused heavily on economy during the show, which featured televised links with workers from several industrial towns.

Putin said Russia has "overcome the peak of the crisis" and claimed credit for softening its impact. He added the government will have to spend more money to support the economy in the meantime.

Russia is weathering its worst economic downturn in a decade as commodities prices collapsed late last year. But it emerged from the recession in the third quarter, its GDP rising by a seasonally adjusted 0.6 percent.

Putin congratulated a 55-year-old caller on her birthday and promised to send computers to a provincial school in reply to a student's plea. He promised more compensation

to a widow whose husband was among 75 people killed in an accident at Russia's largest hydroelectric plant, and offered wage increases and more benefits to others.

"If the situation demands it, I will come to you or to any other place in the Russian Federation, it's my duty," he said. He also expressed disappointment at Russia's failure to qualify for soccer's World Cup and complimented the country's rappers, saying they hold the moral high ground over their Western counterparts for not promoting drugs and alcohol.

In a careful balancing act in response to a question about Josef Stalin, Putin credited the Soviet dictator for his industrialization drive and World War II victory, but he denounced the massive repression of that era.

Putin got visibly riled when the talk turned to the subject of prosecutions that his critics say are politically motivated. He accused former billionaire oil tycoon Mikhail Khodorkovsky and other top shareholders in the Yukos oil company of ordering the killings of opponents and commercial rivals.

Khodorkovsky, once Russia's richest man, is serving an eight-year sentence on fraud and tax evasion charges widely seen as a punishment for challenging Putin.

Delving into foreign policy, Putin sharply admonished the United States for keeping "anachronistic" Cold War-era trade restrictions imposed to penalize the Soviet Union for its refusal to allow free emigration of the Jews.

"The Soviet Union is gone, but they (restrictions) have remained," he said.

Putin also accused Washington of hampering Russia's accession into the World Trade Organization.

"Accession into the WTO remains our strategic goal, but some nations, including the United States, are impeding Russia's WTO bid," he said. □

Suicide bomber hits Somali graduation, 22 dead

JASON STRAZIUSO
MOHAMED OLAD HASSAN
Associated Press Writers

MOGADISHU, Somalia (AP) — A suicide bomber disguised as a woman attacked a graduation ceremony in Somalia on Thursday, turning a rare reason to celebrate into carnage that killed at least 22 people — including medical students, doctors and three government ministers.

The blast was blamed on Islamic militants who have shown a rising ability to carry out sophisticated large-scale bombings against high-profile targets — and highlighted the inability of Somalia's weak

government to protect even the small section of the capital it controls.

"Today should have been a day of celebration — not mourning," said Somalia's ambassador to Kenya, Mohamed Ali Nur. "The hopes of many parents who eagerly awaited their sons' graduation were recklessly dashed ... cutting short the lives of ambitious Somalis." Several hundred people had gathered in the Shamo Hotel to watch the 43 medical, engineering and computer science students from Benadir University receive their diplomas when the blast

ripped through the festively decorated ballroom.

Amateur video of the attack obtained by AP Television News showed the dead, including at least three journalists, lying in pools of blood amid the sound of wails and screams from the wounded. Soldiers, their AK-47 rifles slung over their shoulders, picked through the wreckage with their hands as survivors climbed over the debris of the bombed-out room.

The attack targeted one of Somalia's most important efforts to extricate itself from anarchy and violence,

Guinea's president wounded in attack

RUKMINI CALLIMACHI
Associated Press Writer

CONAKRY, Guinea (AP) — A renegade faction of Guinea's presidential guard opened fire on the African country's leader Thursday, slightly wounding him amid rumors of deep divisions within the army nearly three months after a military-led massacre of protesters at a peaceful rally. President Moussa "Dadis" Camara was shot at by his military aide, who heads the presidential guard, Communications Minister Idrissa Cherif said. A statement read on state TV said the 45-year-old president had been slightly wounded but that his life was not in danger.

"The president of the republic is still the president of the republic and he is in good health," Cherif said as military helicopters and sporadic shooting could be heard in downtown Conakry.

Cherif said Camara had left the country's main military barracks from where he has been running the country since seizing power in a military-led coup 11 months ago. He headed downtown to a military camp housing hundreds of men under the control of Abubakar "Toumba" Diakite,

the president's aide-de-camp. The shooting occurred inside the camp. The incident underscores the deep rifts inside the military clique that grabbed control of the nation of 10 million on Africa's western coast just 11 months ago. Camara had initially promised to quickly organize elections, but then reversed course and began hinting that he planned to run for office, prompting a massive protest Sept. 28. Toumba is accused of having led the presidential guard that opened fire on the peaceful demonstrators that had gathered inside the capital's national stadium. At least 157 people were killed and dozens of women were raped by the red beret-wearing presidential guard who also assaulted them with bayonets, rifle butts and with pieces of wood. At least 20 women were kidnapped and driven away in military trucks to private villas where they were drugged and videotaped while they were being gang raped over several days, according to three survivors as well as several human rights groups. The massacre led the European Union and the African Union to impose sanctions on Guinea, including on top members of



In this file photo taken Friday, Oct. 2, 2009, Guinea military leader Capt. Moussa Dadis Camara salutes during independence day celebrations in Conakry, Guinea. A renegade faction of Guinea's presidential guard opened fire Thursday, Dec. 3, 2009, on the African country's leader, while Moussa Dadis Camara was in Conakry, a government spokesman said, amid rumors of deep divisions within the army, just 11 months after Camara seized Presidential power in a military-led coup.

Associated Press

the junta, who are now the subject of a travel ban. Sources inside the military say that it deeply aggravated divisions that were already present and has led to the clique fracturing further. Members of the junta, including Toumba, are believed to lead private armies that are faithful only to them. A U.N. mission was in Conakry this week investigating the massacre and interviewed top military commanders in order to try to understand how the order to kill protesters was given. □



Somali health minister Qamar Aden Ali, who was killed in a blast at a university graduation ceremony, is seen shortly before the explosion in Mogadishu, Somalia, Thursday, Dec. 3, 2009. A male suicide bomber dressed as a woman attacked a university graduation ceremony Thursday, killing at least 22 people, including three Cabinet ministers and three journalists.

Associated Press

explaining the presence of so many top government officials. The graduating medical students were only the second class to receive diplomas from the medical school. "The loss of our ministers is disastrous, but it is an outrage to target the graduation of medical students and kill those whose only aim in life was to help those most in need in our stricken country," Somali Prime Minister Omar Sharmarke said.

Before last year's graduation, almost two decades had passed since anyone earned a medical degree in Somalia. At the December 2008 ceremony, graduates proudly hoisted their diplomas into the air. This year, there was mayhem as the bomb went off while a Somali official addressed the gathering, sending metal shards and other debris flying and leaving dead and wounded in bloody heaps.

The bomb exploded about a yard from journalists covering the event.

"The explosion occurred really close to me, about a meter away. I jumped over some of the dead people laying on the ground and I went outside," said Associated Press reporter Mohamed Olad Hassan.

"What I think is I was lucky and people who were next to me, closer to the explosion shielded me from the explosion. The explosion was still thundering in my ears when I got back to the office."

Abdul Rahman Bukhari, a reporter for the Saudi-owned Al-Arabiya television station

whose colleague, cameraman Hassan Zubeir, was killed, said the bombing "was the worst moment of my life."

After the attack, overturned white plastic chairs and tables littered the floor, which was stained red with blood. A single sandal lay in a pool of congealed blood, along with a briefcase and graduation programs.

Bodies, some draped with blue cloths, lay alongside the wounded. One man in khaki pants and a white shirt sat in his own blood, twisting his head to watch as victims were dragged out of the building.

On the steps outside, a dead man lay doubled over, his head resting on the blood-soaked ground as though he were praying.

Sharmarke said it was "beneath contempt" to attack and kill students and called for urgent help from the international community to prevent the further rise of al-Shabab, a militant group with links to al-Qaida. "What happened today is a national disaster," said Somali Information Minister Dahir Mohamud Gelle, who confirmed that the ministers for education, higher education and health were killed in the blast.

The ministers for sports and tourism were among the 46 wounded, he said.

Twenty-two people were killed, along with the suicide bomber, Gelle said. The bomber "disguised himself as a woman, complete with a veil and a female's shoes," he said.

□

SPORTS

Aruba TODAY

NFL changes return-to-play rules for concussions

NEW YORK (AP)—National Football League teams now have new, stricter instructions for when players should be allowed to return to games or practices after head injuries, guidelines that go into effect this week.

In the latest step by the league to address the controversial issue, commissioner Roger Goodell sent a memo to the 32 clubs Wednesday saying a player who gets a concussion should not return to action on the same day if he shows certain signs or symptoms.

Those include an inability to remember assignments or plays, a gap in memory, persistent dizziness, and persistent headaches.

The old standard, established in 2007, said a player should not be allowed to return to the same game if he lost consciousness.

Wednesday's memo also says



In this Nov. 26, 2008, file photo, Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger gives a thumbs-up as he is taken off the field after sustaining a concussion during an NFL football game against the Cleveland Browns in Pittsburgh.

Associated Press

players "are to be encouraged to be candid with team medical staffs and fully disclose any signs or symptoms that may be associated with a concussion."

Nearly one-fifth of 160 NFL players surveyed by The Associated Press from Nov. 2-15 replied that they have hidden or played down the effects of a concussion.

The league said its concussion committee, team doctors, outside medical experts and the NFL Players Association developed the new standards. NFLPA assistant executive director George Atallah said the union is "encouraged by this new policy."

He added that the NFLPA "will continue to examine these issues independently to recommend the best possible policies and procedures."

Continued on Page B12



Boston Bruins left wing Marco Sturm, center, celebrates his goal against the Tampa Bay Lightning with teammates Patrice Bergeron, left, and Zdeno Chara (33) during the second period of an NHL hockey game in Boston on Wednesday, Dec. 2, 2009.

Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Marc Savard celebrated his new seven-year contract extension by scoring his 200th NHL goal, and Marco Sturm scored twice in 2:33 to lead the Boston Bruins to a 4-1 victory over the Tampa Bay Lightning in the NHL on Wednesday. Tim Thomas stopped 39 shots to give the Bruins their sixth

victory in seven games. He made his second straight start since missing six games with an undisclosed injury. Mark Recchi had three assists, and Zdeno Chara and Patrice Bergeron had two each to help Boston move back into first place in the Northeast Division. Savard has five goals and six assists in his last

NHL Roundup

Sturm double leads Boston to win over Tampa Bay

11 games.

Canucks 5, Devils 2

At Newark, New Jersey, Henrik and Daniel Sedin had a hand in three first-period goals, and Roberto Luongo made 27 saves as Vancouver beat New Jersey.

Alex Burrows, Sami Salo, Daniel Sedin, Alexander Elder and Jannik Hansen had goals for the Canucks, who won for the fifth time in seven games. Luongo topped New Jersey's Martin Brodeur in a matchup of likely Canadian goalies when the Olympic Games are held in Vancouver in February.

Niclas Bergfors and Travis Zajac scored for the Devils.

Panthers 6, Avalanche 5, SO

At Sunrise, Florida, Stephen Weiss recorded his second NHL hat trick and scored in the shootout to lift Florida over Colorado.

Nathan Horton and Dominic Moore also had goals for the Panthers, who snapped a five-game losing streak.

T.J. Galiardi and Matt Duchene both scored for Colorado with less than a minute left in regulation to send the game to overtime. Chris Stewart and Paul Stastny also had goals for Colorado. Duchene netted another goal in the second period.

Scott Clemmensen, starting in place of injured Panthers goalie Tomas Vokoun, made 29 saves. Vokoun is recovering after he

was hit in the head by Florida defenseman Keith Ballard's stick during a bizarre on-ice accident Monday night.

At St. Paul, Minnesota, Andrew Ebbett's rebound shot in overtime lifted Minnesota over Nashville.

Guillaume Latendresse, who scored for Minnesota during a five-goal first period, was stopped twice by Nashville goalie Pekka Rinne before Ebbett grabbed the puck and punched in the next try with a backhand from the slot.

In other NHL games it was, Boston 4, Tampa Bay 1; Vancouver 5, New Jersey 2; Florida 6, Colorado 5, SO; and Minnesota 5, Nashville 4, OT.

Poulter, Johnson tied for lead at Tiger's event

DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

THOUSAND OAKS, California (AP) — England's Ian Poulter and Zach Johnson of the United States shared the Chevron Challenge lead Thursday at 4-under 68.

Playing for the sixth straight week after flying all over Asia, Poulter had a great round turn into a good one on the 18th hole at Sherwood Country Club when he drove into the trees, clipped a branch and three-putted from 35 feet for a double bogey.

"It's 4-under par and I'm disappointed," Poulter said. "I'm leading, but I should way clear."

Not only did he have that double bogey at the end, Poulter twice three-putted on par 5s, and had a vicious lip-out on the seventh. He figures he wasted a round that could have been in the neighborhood of 64, although the Englishman has been around long enough to realize golf doesn't work that way.

Johnson also dropped a couple of shots, although he made up ground on the par 5s. He remains famous for his Masters victory in 2007 when he chose to lay up on the par 5s at Augusta National. Puffing out his chest with a sarcastic grin, Johnson told of making two birdies on the par 5s by reaching the green in two.

He was pleased with his 68, for no other reason than he barely touched a club in the two weeks before he arrived. "I feel like my game is in a position good enough to win," said Johnson, who has won twice on the PGA Tour this year.

Padraig Harrington, winless in official events since capturing his second straight major at the PGA Championship last year, was steady in his round of 69. No one else managed to break 70 on a crisp, sunny day in the Conejo Valley foothills. The 18-man field is missing its host — Tiger Woods — who pulled out of the tournament Monday citing unspecified

injuries from his car crash last week that has dominated talk at Sherwood. In the days since he withdrew, there was a magazine report alleging an affair and an apology from

Woods for his "personal failings." Players have spoken about the scandal in the days leading up to the tournament, all of them offering support to Woods. Once the tournament

Former top-ranked Amelie Mauresmo retires

SAMUEL PETREQUIN

AP Sports Writer

ISSY-LES-MOULINEAUX, France (AP) — Two-time Grand Slam champion Amelie Mauresmo retired from tennis Thursday, saying she no longer had a burning desire for competition.

The 30-year-old Frenchwoman, a former top-ranked player who finished the season No. 21, said she doesn't have the will to keep playing at the highest level.

"I don't want to train anymore," Mauresmo said after shedding tears about the decision. "I had to make a decision, which became evident in the last few months and weeks. When you grew older, it's more difficult to stay at the top." Mauresmo, who won both of her Grand Slam titles in 2006, at the Australian Open and Wimbledon, said she was happy to leave on a good note after winning her 25th singles title — her first in almost two years — in Paris this season. She also secured seven wins over players from the Top 10 in her final year.

"It's a bit sad, but this is the right decision," Mauresmo said. "I was lucky enough to have an exceptional career and to experience very strong feelings on the court."

Mauresmo, who was the No. 1-ranked player in 2004, played her last match in the second round of this year's U.S. Open, losing to Aleksandra Wozniak of Canada 6-4, 6-0. She then pulled out of her last two tournaments of the year.

"It became very hard in build-up to the U.S. Open," Mauresmo said. "If I were able to enter the court, play and shine, of course I could continue, but to achieve this you need to put in such hard work. And I'm not capable of that." □



began, their attention shifted to golf. This is the first time the tournament is awarding official world ranking points. "We haven't talked about it," Johnson said. "It hasn't even been a thought."

Jim Furyk and PGA champion Y.E. Yang were at 70. Graeme McDowell, who replaced Woods in the field, was among those at 71.

Poulter and Johnson could not be any more different, from their dress to their style of play to their approach this week.

Johnson already has an eye toward 2010, bringing along his trainer and spending more time in the gym than on the practice range. He is trying to win, as he does every tournament, although he referred to this as an offseason workout week.

"I'm not trying to treat it any different," he said. "Once I get off the golf course, it's a little difference. The workouts stink. I'm hurting right now."

Poulter began his journey with a victory in the Singapore Open. From there he played the HSBC Champions in Shanghai, then the Hong Kong Open, followed by the Dubai World Championship and the World Cup in China.

Next week? The Shark Shootout in Florida.

He already has worked out that a strong finish this week could move him into the top 10 in the world. He is still competing the way he did at the start of the year.

"My calendar says '09," he said. "It doesn't finish until I have my Christmas dinner." □



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NBA Roundup

Nets make worst ever start to NBA season

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EAST RUTHERFORD, New Jersey (AP) — The New Jersey Nets were pounded into NBA infamy on Wednesday night, falling 117-101 to the Dallas Mavericks for their 18th straight loss to start the season.

The 0-18 record is the worst ever start to an NBA season, surpassing the 1988-89 Miami Heat and 1999 Los Angeles Clippers, who both dropped their first 17 games.

Dallas made 17 of 19 shots and opened a 27-point lead in a nearly flawless second quarter, burying the Nets early. The Mavericks shot 81 percent in the first half, the first NBA team to make 80 percent of its shots in a half since 2006.

Dirk Nowitzki scored 24 points, and former Nets star Jason Kidd had 16 points, 10 assists and eight rebounds for Dallas.

Chris Douglas-Roberts scored 24 points for the Nets.

Cavaliers 107, Suns 90

In Cleveland, Shaquille O'Neal scored 12 points against his former team,

helping Cleveland down Phoenix.

O'Neal added nine rebounds in 21 minutes, while LeBron James just missed a triple double for the Cavs, finishing with 12 points, 10 assists and eight rebounds.

Cleveland center Zydrunas Ilgauskas set the club record for games played with 724.

Channing Frye scored 22 points for Phoenix.

Hawks 146, Raptors 115

In Atlanta, the hosts posted their biggest score in 16 years, thrashing Toronto.

Al Horford had 24 points to lead nine scorers in double figures — their most in a game since 1987.

Toronto's Chris Bosh had a season-low two points in only 16 minutes on court.

Magic 118, Knicks 104

In Orlando, Florida, Rashard Lewis scored 17 of his 20 points in Orlando's 41-point third quarter that sank New York.

Dwight Howard added 19 points and 10 rebounds for the Magic, which has nine wins from ten games.

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From left to right, New Jersey Nets' Josh Boone, Sean Williams and Devin Harris sit on from the bench during the fourth quarter of an NBA basketball game against the Dallas Mavericks, Wednesday, Dec. 2, 2009, in East Rutherford, N.J. The Nets are 0-18 as the Mavericks won 117-101.

Associated Press

Wilson Chandler had 24 points and finished with 22 points for the Knicks. as Houston downed Los

Rockets 102, Clippers 85

In Los Angeles, Aaron Brooks Chase Budinger added 19 made his first eight shots points for the Rockets. □

CONCUSSION**Continued from page B10**

The new policy states, in part: "Once removed for the duration of a practice or game, the player should not be considered for return-to-football activities until he is fully asymptotic, both at rest and after exertion, has a normal neurological examination, normal neuropsychological testing, and has been cleared to return by both his team physician(s) and the independent neurological consultant."

Teams were told this month they have to find an outside neurologist who can be consulted on concussions, and NFL spokesman Greg Aiello said Wednesday all of those independent doctors have been approved and are in place. Since last month's congressional hearing on NFL head injuries, momentum has been building for changes in league policy. The revised return-to-play rules come about a week after Goodell sent a memo to clubs informing them that the two co-chairmen of the league's concussions committee had resigned and that he has been looking into possible rule changes.

On Wednesday, Cleveland Browns running back Jamal Lewis was put on injured reserve with post-concussion symptoms, ending his NFL career. Lewis had previously said he would retire at the end of the season. His teammate, starting safety Brodney Pool, also went on IR after getting at least his fourth known concussion last weekend.

They were among 11 players listed on Wednesday's league-wide injury report with concussions. Another eight were listed with head injuries.

The two starting quarterbacks from last season's Super Bowl — Pittsburgh's Ben Roethlisberger and Arizona's Kurt Warner — sat out last Sunday after saying during the week they planned to play despite getting head injuries the previous week.

"The evidence demonstrates that team medical staffs have been addressing concussions in an increasingly cautious and conservative way," Goodell wrote in Wednesday's memo. "This new return-to-play statement reinforces our commitment to advancing player safety. Along with improved equipment, better education, and rules changes designed to reduce impacts to the head, it will make our game safer for the men who play it, and set an important example for players at all levels of play." □

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ORANJESTAD - La fiesta religiosa-cultural “El Asociación Amigos de día de las Velitas”. Colombia invita a toda A las 7 de la noche habrá un la comunidad en Aruba a desfile navideño partiendo celebrar por cuarta vez la del Consulado Colombiano-



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Decoración a cargo de Angela V. y la participación del grupo de teatro infantil “Marielis Learning Institute” , amenizando la miniteca Latín Mix y tendremos grupos musicales como “Gaita nos cu nos”, Edgar y su tambora y Banda Esquema.

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dirigido por el famoso Freddy Montoya. Rifaremos un tiquete de Avianca para el angelito más bello. Contaremos con la participación de Venezuela(Instituto Venezolano de la Cultura), Perú(con su hermoso baile de la Marinera), Colombia (Amanecer Porteño con su currulao) y más.

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Bolivia: campaña electoral cierra en clima de calma

LA PAZ (AP) - Una de las ciudades más pobres de Bolivia, escenario de violentas protestas en 2003 que derivaron en la caída del gobierno de entonces, será el escenario del cierre de campaña del presidente Evo Morales, que se perfila como favorito para ganar los comicios del domingo. Su principal contendor el derechista Manfred Reyes Villa prepara un cierre de campaña en la ciudad oriental de Santa Cruz, principal reducto de la oposición. El tercero en carrera, el empresario centrista Samuel Doria Medina, anuncio concentraciones en varias ciudades capitales.

El jueves cesa la campaña electoral y entra en vigor un auto de buen gobierno que prohíbe el expendio de bebidas alcohólicas, espectáculos públicos y viajes 24 horas antes del día de la votación, informó el órgano electoral.

La policía anunció que movilizará a 37.000 efectivos para garantizar la seguridad pública el día de los comicios. Por norma, incluso el transporte público y los vuelos de las aerolíneas, paralizarán ese día.

Morales concluirá una maratónica campaña que

fue superior en despliegue y recursos a la de sus oponentes.

Ocho frentes compiten en la campaña que hasta ahora se desarrolló en un clima de calma con esporádicos choques entre bandos oponentes que sólo han dejado contusos y autos apedreados.

Diversas encuestas aseguraron un triunfo holgado del presidente Morales con un 52% a 55% de las preferencias, mientras Reyes Villa obtendría un 20% y Doria Medina un 10%.

El mandatario se siente tan seguro de ganar que ya convocó a la primera reunión de su nuevo gobierno para el 12 de diciembre. Asumió en enero de 2006, y de resultar vencedor en los comicios del domingo, asumirá por un mandato de cinco años, a partir del 22 de enero del 2010. En tiempo récord la corte electoral empadronó nuevamente a todos los electores en un formato digital con huellas dactilares y fotografía para reducir las posibilidades de fraude.

Más de 200 observadores de la Unión Europea, la Organización de Estados Americanos y el Centro Carter ya se encuentran en Bolivia haciendo seguimientos.

Los bolivianos acudirán a las urnas el 6 de diciembre para celebrar elecciones generales y 18 consultas sobre autonomía departamental, regional e indígena. Elegirán a un presidente, un vicepresidente, una nueva Asamblea Legislativa Plurinacional y en 18 regiones votarán por una administración autónoma.

Los habitantes de los departamentos de La Paz, Cochabamba, Chuquisaca, Oruro y Potosí decidirán en esta oportunidad el modelo de autogobierno.

Morales alienta un proyecto político izquierdista de reivindicación étnica y orientado al estatismo. Enfrenta una oposición conservadora que defiende un proyecto liberal y cuestiona el supuesta línea autoritaria del mandatario.

El Ministro de Gobierno Alfredo Rada, denunció que Reyes Villa planea huir del país un día después de los comicios para eludir a la justicia que le inició proceso por supuestas irregularidades en su gestión de gobernador y anticipó que sería detenido, pero el jefe de campaña del candidato derechista, Erick Fajardo, desmintió la acusación. □

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